



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

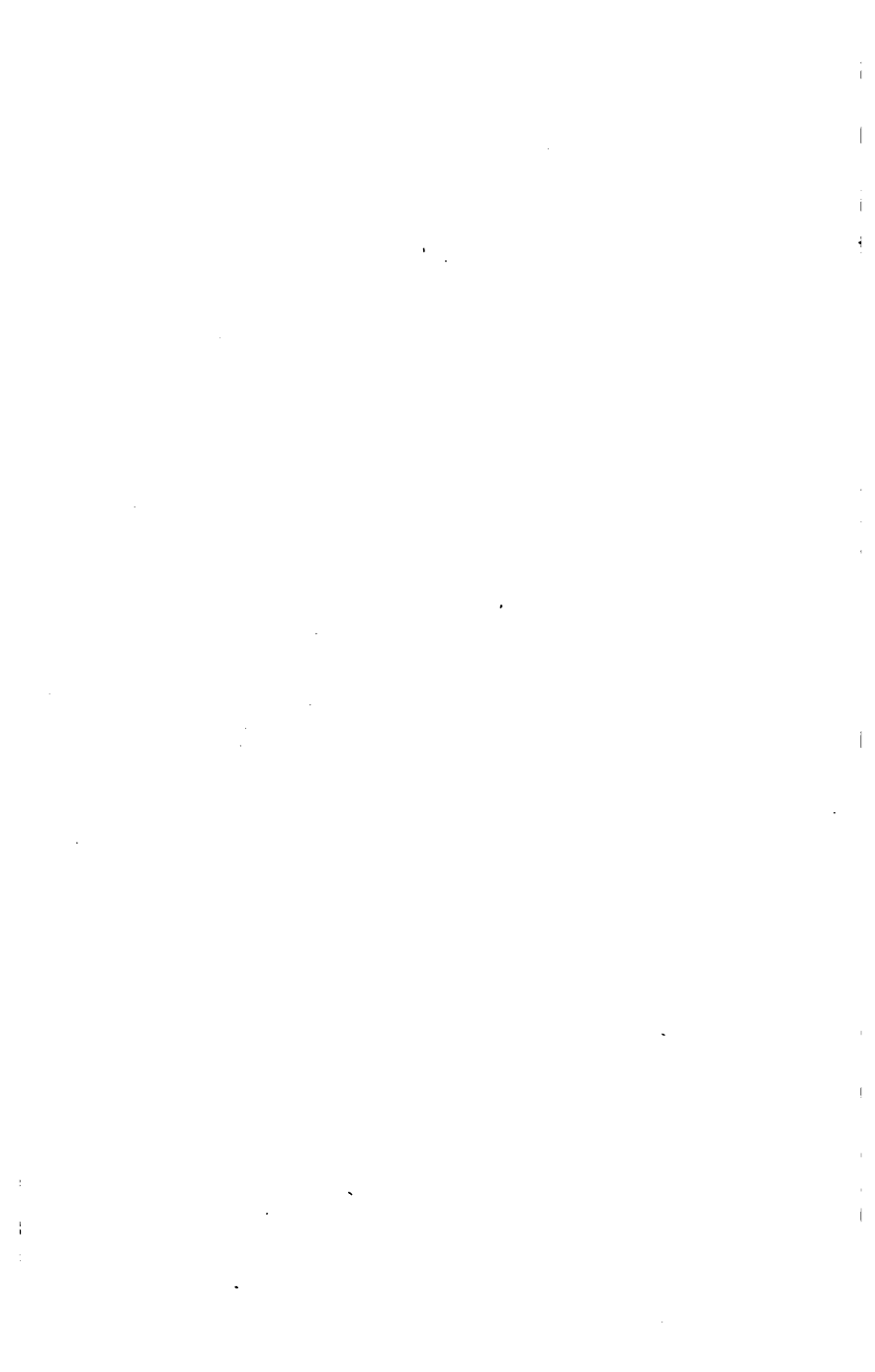
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>











THE HOMILIST.

EDITED BY

DAVID THOMAS, D.D.,

OF LONDON,

AND

URIJAH REES THOMAS,

OF BRISTOL,

VOL. II., ENLARGED EDITOR'S SERIES.

VOLUME XXXIX. FROM COMMENCEMENT.



"THE LETTER KILLETH, BUT THE SPIRIT GIVETH LIFE."—1st Cor.

LONDON:
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO.,
STATIONERS' HALL COURT.

PHILADELPHIA: SMITH & ENGLISH.

1876.

Per. 13205. c. 17.



PREFACE.

THE MISSION of THE HOMILIST is not to supply Sermons for indolent or incompetent preachers, but stimulus and tonic for the true-hearted, hard-working, and genuine teacher. It does not deal in the "ready-made," but in the raw material. It only admits contributions of the most *condensed* and *suggestive* character. It requires *things*, not words—healthy saplings, just rising into sight and struggling into shape, not lifeless timber, however exquisitely carved or brilliantly polished. The former *may* grow, the latter *must* rot. It prefers one life-germ to a cart-load of manufactured sermons. It does not treat sacred texts as pegs on which to hang artistic discourses, but as bread-corn for hungry souls.

Although THE HOMILIST has passed through *five* Serial forms, numbering in all *thirty-seven* volumes, of which about ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY THOUSAND have been sold, another Series has been called for, and that by clergymen of all denominations, not only in this country and the colonies, but throughout Europe and America. The larger portion of the volumes that have appeared are out of print, and but few remain unsold; still the circulation continues as great as ever.

This Volume, the THIRTY-NINTH of THE HOMILIST, is the SECOND of the new and Enlarged Series. It has, as will be seen, an additional Editor, many new Contributors, and some new branches of thought and intelligence for pulpit service.

As the old key-note will still rule the melodies of THE HOMILIST, and no new specific description is requisite, the former Preface may be again transcribed.

"First: The book has no *finish*. The Editor has not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the *design*. Their incompleteness is *intentional*. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly, but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and so polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the Biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented 'germs,' which, if sown in good soil, under a free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

"Secondly: The book has no *denominationalism*. It has no special reference to 'our Body' or to 'our Church.' As denominational strength is not necessarily *soul* strength, nor denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of THE HOMILIST to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man as a citizen of the universe, and not for him as the limb of a sect.

"Thirdly: The book has no *polemical Theology*. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the *cardinal* doctrines which constitute what is called the 'orthodox creed'—has, nevertheless, the deep and ever-deepening conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed or that man requires; and that no theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great Book of God; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but means to an end. *Spiritual morality is that end*. Consequently, to the *heart* and *life* every Biblical thought and idea should be directed. Your systems of divinity the Author will not disparage; but his impression is, that they can no more answer the purpose of the Gospel than *pneumatics* can answer the purpose of the atmosphere. In the case of Christianity, as well as the air, the world can live without its scientific truths; but it must have the free flowings of their vital elements. Coleridge has well said, 'Too soon did the Doctors of the Church forget that the heart—the moral nature—was the beginning and the end, and that truth, knowledge, and insight were comprehended in its expansion.'

"The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all Churches who have so earnestly rallied round him, to the many who have encouraged him by their letters, and to those especially who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the 'last day' prove that the help rendered has been worthily bestowed; and that THE HOMILIST did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavours to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the every-day life of man."

DAVID THOMAS.

Erewyn Upper Tulse Hill,
London.

CONTENTS.

All the Articles in this Volume are written by the Editor, with the exception of those which have their Authors' names attached.

HOMILIES.

	PAGE
The Seed of the Kingdom (H. R. Reynolds, D.D.)	1
The Personality of God and the Mysteriousness of Man (Jabez Cole)	81
Lazarus: his Life and its Lessons. (1) The Secular Position of the Friends of Jesus (Evan Lewis, B.A., F.R.S.S.)	161
Isaiah's Vision (G. Cron)	241
Divine Rewards (F. G. Huntington, D.D.)	321
The Successful Discipline of Life	401

THE PREACHER'S HOMILETIC COMMENTARY.

HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

C. Revelations of the Good and Bad in Human Nature	11
CI. The Religious Sentiment in War	99
CII. The Pious Experiences of an Exile	172
CIII. A Testimony and an Exhortation	249
CIV. The Greatest Things of the Soul	337
CV. Man's Enmity towards Man.	410

HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF JOB.

LXIV. Job's Self-Vindication (continued)	16
LXV. The First Speech of Elihu (1) Controversy, Indignation, and Age	104
LXVI. Ibid. (2) A Young Preacher Justifying His Mission	176
LXVII. Ibid. (3) Grounds for Claiming a Religious Hearing	254
LXVIII. Ibid. (4) The Common in Controversy, Sin, and Theology	342
LXIX. Ibid. (5) The Successful Discipline of Life	414

SERMONIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

LXIV. The Rationale of Unbelief	23
LXV. The Anti-diabolism of Christ	108
LXVI. Christ Greater and Older than Abraham	184
LXVII. The Man Born Blind. Types of Character in Relation to Christ's Work. (1) Those who consciously Need His Work	258

LXVIII. The Man Born Blind. Types of Character in relation to Christ's Work. (2) Those who are only speculatively Interested in His Work	PAGE 346
LXIX. Ibid. (3) Those who are bitterly Prejudiced against His Work	416

THE PREACHER'S GERMS OF THOUGHT.

The Lord a Shepherd (John Hill)	27
Christian Magnanimity (D. Jones, B.A.)	29
Aspects of Perfection (W. Harris)	32
St. Paul's Estimate of Life and Death (F. R. Young)	33
The Fatherhood of God (Septimus March, B.A.) :—	
3. His Relation to the Bereaved	35
4. His Relation to Christ and Redemption	270
The Hope of Perfection (Walter Lloyd)	40
Prayer (G. Deane, D.Sc.) :—	
3. The Scientific Test of Prayer	117
4. Solidarité in Prayer	360
Primitive Heroism (F. W. Brown)	120
Christ Knocking (E. D. Solomon)	188
Ideal Youthhood (T. Baron)	192
Work with a Will, for God Works (J. S. Swan)	195
Buying the Truth (W. Clarkson, B.A.)	200
David's Charge to Solomon (T. D.)	204
"The Power of Prayer" (W. Forsyth, M.A.)	208
Men Denying the Just One (W. T.)	264
Christian Unity (Anon.)	266
The Condescension of Christ (H. M.)	274
The Increase of Faith (F. R. Young)	278
Food and Forgiveness (D. E. Thomas)	350
The Crown of Moral Heroes (F. W. Brown)	354
The Mission of Christ in Relation to the Moral Law (T. Baron)	357
Christ's Predictions, His Credentials	419

NOTES ON THE APOSTLES' CREED.

BY URBAN REES THOMAS.

1. "I Believe"	50
2. "God, the Father Almighty"	126
3. "Maker of Heaven and Earth"	111
4. "Jesus Christ, His only Son"	216
5. "Our Lord"	217
6. "Conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary"	284
7. "Was Crucified"	372
8. "Dead"	430

THE PREACHERS' FINGER-POST.

	PAGE		PAGE
Prayer	43	The Responsibility of Man	282
Soul Liberty	45	The Esteemed of Man and	
Life as it Is	46	Abhorred of God	283
Balancings in Life (Frederick		The Curse Removed :—	
Hastings)	49	1. Ceremonially	366
Self Selling	127	2. Morally	368
Philosophy and its Counter-		Great Things in the Material	
feit	128	Domain	369
The Government of the World	129	Warning Against a Danger-	
The Two Grand Types of		ous Fling (T. Kelly)	371
Character	210	Christmas : " Things are not	
Mystery	212	what they Seem "	424
Pulpits Sinking into Popular		God the Constant Friend of	
Contempt	214	the Good	427
The Rod of Moses (T. D.)	215	Praising the Dead more than	
Spiritual Paternity	280	the Living	428

SEEDS OF SERMONS FROM THE MINOR PROPHETS.

MICAH.

CXXLII. Man in the Moral Court of History	52
CXXLIII. Fellowship with God	54
CXXLIV. God's Voice to Cities	56
CXXLV. Civic Sins	131
CXXLVI. Omri and Ahab	133
CXXLVII. The Wail of a True Patriot	134
CXXLVIII. The Possibilities of Godly Men Falling into Great	
Trouble	220
CXXLIX. Religious Persecutors	222
CCL. The Good Time Coming	223
CCLI. Man's Ruin the Fruit of his own Conduct	286
CCLII. A Prayer	287
CCLIII. The Ultimate Deliverance from Sin	288
CCLIV. The Incomparableness of God Illustrated in His For-	
giveness of Sin. (1) The Nature of His Forgiveness	374.
CCLV. Ibid. (2) The Source of His Forgiveness	376.
CCLVI. Ibid. (3) The Completeness of His Forgiveness	378

NAHUM.

CCLVII. Great Sins bringing Great Ruin	432
CCLVIII. The Patience of God	433
CCLIX. God's Power	434

BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

	PAGE
Recapitulation of the Five Theoretic Modes of Salvation (W. R. Alger)	137
Ἀντρεν: A Ransom (J. P. Norris, B.D.)	225
Proper Names formed from the Names of Heathen Deities (W. F. Wilkinson, M.A.)	290, 379
Pauline Use of the Words δίκαιον, δικαιοσύνη, δίκαιος, δικαίωμα, δικαιοσύνη, etc., etc. (W. J. Irons, D.D.)	436

THE PREACHERS' EMBLEMATORY HELPS.

ANCIENT MYTHS: THEIR MORAL MEANINGS.

BY URIJAH R. THOMAS.

VII. Perseus: The Claims and Rewards of Piety	58
VIII. Nemesis; or, Retribution	142
IX. The Sirens; or, False Pleasure	228
X. Dionysos; or, Man's Animal Appetites	298
XI. Ares, or Mars: The Spirit of War	385
XII. Kronos; or, The Function of Time	446

SCIENTIFIC FACTS AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

BY A NATURALIST.

The Monkey: Ludicrous Effects of Imitation	62
The Appetite of some Animals: Consumption without Assimilation	63
The Magnet: The Love for Extremes	63
The Crust of the Earth: The Common Bond of Animated Nature	63
The Vulture: Precedence	145
The Eskimos: The Improvident Life	145
The Caracaras: Subsisting on Offensiveness	145
The Walrus: Social Instincts in Unexpected Forms	231
The Transmission of Hereditary Peculiarities	302
The Desmodium Gyrans: The Restless Temperament	302
Varieties in Trees: The Neutralization of Party Idiosyncrasies	303
The Mirage: The Illusions of Life	303
The Kite: Unexpected Enemies	389
The Elephant: A Strong Man's Deportment	389
The Ant-Lion: The Crafty Rogue	390
The Caribitos: War Orators	450
The Black Rhinoceros: The Absurdity of Passion	451
The Laplander: The Effects of Climate on Intellect and Morals	451
The Opossum: The Impostor	452

BIBLICAL ANECDOTES AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

	PAGE
V. Envy (T. L. M.)	64
VI. Moses Smiting the Rock in a Wrong Spirit	146

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

The Conclusive Proof (Canon Norris)	51
Gold (Shakspeare)	57
A Pure Heart.—Godly Sorrow.—Mercy	60
The God-revealing Love.—Influence.—Interdependence	61
Life in Light (E. T. D.)	62
Haughtiness (W. M. Thackeray)	98
Crimes	103
Hell	125
Ideas	144
Christianity	147
Murder.—Profanity.—Mysteries (S. P. Atkinson)	148
Philanthropy	171
The Laws of Nature	183
Christianity	219
Soul Salvation	227
The Worldling a Hypocrite	229
Spiritual Wealth.—The Heart.—Truth	230
Spiritual Riches.—The Morrow	231
Primitive Beliefs.—Profanity	248
Sensuality.—The Possessors of the Earth	285
Conscience	300
Holy Thoughts.—Fruit of a Man's Soul.—Trying to Pray (E. T. D.)	301
Murder	349
Immortality	373
Great Ideas	384
Man's Heart	387
Prayer.—Holy Thoughts.—The Progress of the Soul	388
Life, a Solemn Reality (Thos. Carlyle)	409
Division of Time (Mrs. Somerville).—Time (Browne)	413
Time (Bishop Horne).—Hope in the Cross (Wm. Cowper)	413
The Preacher (Theodore Parker)	449
Character	450

HOMILETICAL BRIEVIARIES CCXLI. TO CCLXIII.

	PAGE		PAGE
The Transcendent Name	65	Soul Liberty	149
Exemplary Maternal Love	66	The Christly Character	150
A Glorious Allegation	67	The Best Social Wish	150
A Sordid Religion	68	Judas Given to Christ	151
A Foregleam of the Gospel		Christ's Condemnation of the	
(U. R. Thomas)	69	Sword (U. R. Thomas)	151

	PAGE		PAGE
The Spirit with You . . .	232	Devil Worship . . .	390
The Mission of Moses . . .	233	Favoured Peoples . . .	391
The Death of Enemies . . .	234	Genuine Religious Teaching.	392
The Three Greatest Things .	304	A Significant Voice from	
Moral Courage . . .	305	Heaven . . .	452
Harvest Lessons (Urijah B.		The Eye and Heart of Christ	453
Thomas) . . .	306	God and Man . . .	454
Collections in Church (<i>Ibid.</i>)	307		

MY MINISTRY AT STOCKWELL 70, 152, 235, 308, 393 455

LITERARY NOTICES.

JULY.

English Literature . . .	75
Travels in Portugal . . .	76
Spiritual Magazine . . .	76
Life of J. Dixon . . .	77
Rudiments of Theology . .	78
Reunion in the Heavenly	
Kingdom . . .	78
Old Truths in New Lights .	79
The Paraclete . . .	79
Christian Baptism . . .	80
Chaldean Account of Genesis	80

AUGUST.

Introduction to Life of Christ	158
Priesthood . . .	159
The Day of Pentecost . . .	160
The Personality of Christ .	160
Freedom of Will Vindicated .	160

SEPTEMBER.

Whedon on New Testament,	
vol. iv.	238
The Works of Augustine . .	239
The Christian's Manual . .	239
Commenting and Comment-	
aries	239
The Kingdom of the Heavens	240
The two Napoleons . . .	240
Questions Indicative of	
Character	240

OCTOBER.

The Humiliation of Christ .	319
Allegories and Tales . . .	320

NOVEMBER.

Reasons for Renouncing Infi-	
delity	399
"He that Overcometh" . . .	400
Little Folks	400
Biblical Theology	400
The Smallest Church Service	400

DECEMBER.

Sermons Preached before the	
University of London . . .	460
Life, Letters, and Journals of	
George Ticknor	462
Messianic Prophecy . . .	462
Biblical Commentary on the	
Prophecies of Ezekiel . . .	463
Clefts of the Rock	463
Memories of Bethany . . .	463
Gone Before	464
Healing Leaves	464
Dickenson's Theological	
Quarterly	465
Autobiography of Mrs.	
Fletcher	465
True to Life	466

INDEX OF TEXTS.

Book.	Chap.	Ver.	Page	Book	Chap.	Ver.	Page
Exodus	3	10	233	Micah	7	13	286
Exodus	4	19	234	Micah	7	14	287
Exodus	17	9	215	Micah	7	15-17	288
Deut.	9	6	391	Micah	7	18	374, 376
Deut.	32	2	392	Micah	7	19	378
Deut.	32	17	390	Nahum	1	1, 2	432
Ruth	2	9	306	Nahum	1	3	433
2 Sam.	3	39	49	Nahum	1	3-6	434
2 Sam.	14	14	69	Malachi	1	10	68
2 Kings	2	19-22	46	Malachi	2	9	214
1 Chron.	28	9	204	Matt.	5	17	357
2 Chron.	20	12	305	Matt.	6	11, 12	350
Job	31	1-40	16	Matt.	15	22-28	66
Job	32	1-7	104	Matt.	16	1	117
Job	32	8-22	176	Matt.	20	20-23	321
Job	33	1-7	254	Matt.	26	52	151
Job	33	8-18	342	Mark	4	26-29	1
Job	33	19-33	401, 414	Mark	10	45	225
Psalms	23	1	27	Luke	2	12	424
Psalms	59	1-17	11	Luke	8	5	369
Psalms	60	1-12	99	Luke	10	38-42	161
Psalms	61	1-8	172	Luke	15	2	67
Psalms	62	1-12	249	Luke	16	15	283
Psalms	63	1-11	337	Luke	17	1	282
Psalms	64	1-10	410	Luke	17	5	278
Psalms	68	5	35	John	1	18	216
Psalms	139	14	81	John	3	16	270
Psalms	144	12	192	John	4	27	274
Prov.	23	23	200	John	8	45-48	23
Eccles.	4	2	428	John	8	48-51	108
Isaiah	6	1-7	241	John	8	52-59	184
Isaiah	44	24	111	John	9	1-7	258
Isaiah	52	3	127	John	9	8-13	346
Daniel	4	35	129	John	9	14-18	416
Daniel	12	3	354	John	11	27	50
Micah	6	1-5	52	John	13	13	217
Micah	6	6-8	54	John	14	6	126
Micah	6	9	56	John	14	17	232
Micah	6	10-15	131	John	16	4	419
Micah	6	16	133	John	17	12	151
Micah	7	1-6	134	John	19	33	430
Micah	7	7-9	220	Acts	3	14	264
Micah	7	10	222	Acts	5	41	120
Micah	7	11, 12	223	Acts	10	9-30	208

Book	Chap.	Ver.	Page	Book	Chap.	Ver.	Page
Acts	22	7	453	Phil.	1	21	33
Acts	22	8	452	Phil.	2	9	65
Rom.	14	12	454	Phil.	2	12, 13	195
1 Cor.	4	15	280	Phil.	3	12, 15	32
1 Cor.	15	49	210	Phil.	4	5	29
1 Cor.	15	53	40	Col.	2	2	212
1 Cor.	16	1	307	Col.	2	6	150
2 Cor.	3	17	45	Col.	2	8	128
2 Cor.	13	9	150	Heb.	10	35	371
Gal.	2	3-5	149	Heb.	13	5	427
Gal.	3	1	372	James	5	14, 15	360
Gal.	3	13, 14	366, 368	1 Peter	3	7	43
Gal.	4	4	284	1 John	5	20	304
Eph.	4	3	266	Rev.	3	20	188

AN ADMIRABLE CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR YOUNG MEN.

THE

PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHER;

A DAILY MONITOR FOR THE BUSINESS MEN OF ENGLAND,

Is a large and handsome volume, consisting of upwards of 800 pages demy 8vo: it contains 365 sententious, suggestive, moral readings on every verse in the Book of Proverbs. Price 12s. 6d., *post free*, direct from the Author. Where Six copies are ordered, one volume will be presented free. The following are a few of the many highly favourable notices which have appeared in the press concerning the work:—

"The expositions are luminous—the illustrations are startling and effective."—*The British Quarterly*. "A work in every way worthy of the able Editor of the *Homilist*. It is at once practical and philosophical; written in a singularly racy, concise, and interesting style."—*The Echo*. "We have read various other works on the Proverbs, but they are not to be compared in power, appropriateness, and stimulus to the work before us. The thought is philosophic and the spirit living."—*The Welsh Quarterly*. "It is rich in practical suggestiveness and high moral teaching."—*The Independent*. "The Book is rich in good thoughts, and the ethics admirable, lofty, and pure."—*Wesleyan Magazine*. "On every page sparkle gems, both as regards thought and expression. In the author the understanding and the imagination are a splendid pair of faculties."—*The Evangelical Repository*. "We shall value this book as a considerable contribution to the literature of the Proverbs. . . . A work suggestive and instructive."—*The Sword and Trowel*. "We trust that many merchants and tradesmen will buy the volume, and keep it at hand. Preachers and teachers too will find it abounding in quickening suggestions."—*The Christian Family*.

THE BIBLICAL LITURGY.

SEVENTH THOUSAND.

Containing TWENTY-FOUR Biblical Services, also the Anglican Liturgy, twenty-six Original Hymns, and Music to the various Canticles and Chants. Price 1s. 6d. Hodder & Stoughton, London.

"Your Liturgy is the best I know."—*Dr. Halley*. "A product of exquisite skill."—*Christian Spectator*. "Calculated to excite devotional feelings in the minds of the assembled congregation."—*Nonconformist*.



The Leading Homily.

THE SEED OF THE KINGDOM.

“AND HE SAID, SO IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AS IF A MAN SHOULD CAST SEED INTO THE GROUND; AND SHOULD SLEEP, AND RISE NIGHT AND DAY, AND THE SEED SHOULD SPRING AND GROW UP, HE KNOWETH NOT HOW. FOR THE EARTH BRINGETH FORTH FRUIT OF HERSELF; FIRST THE BLADE, THEN THE EAR, AFTER THAT THE FULL CORN IN THE EAR. BUT WHEN THE FRUIT IS BROUGHT FORTH, IMMEDIATELY HE PUTTETH IN THE SICKLE, BECAUSE THE HARVEST IS COME.”—*Mark iv. 26-29.*

THE parable of the sower, as it is given by each of the three Evangelists, commences with the words, “Behold, a sower went forth to sow;” there is no introductory phrase whatever. It is true, that when expounding the parable to His disciples and those that were with Him, our Lord characterized the seed as “the seed of the kingdom;” but he made no such reference in the original utterance of the great enigma. Now, it is not to be supposed that among the vast crowds who waited on Him, those only who remained behind for further instruction gained glimpses of the meaning of His discourse. The image was one not unfrequently used by classic and Oriental writers, when discussing the relations of the teacher to the taught.

An Oriental crowd, accustomed to the use of figurative language, would perceive at a glance some part of the great Teacher’s meaning; and since many among them were “way-side hearers,” and others resembled the dry shallow soil upon a rocky place, the sense of disappointment may have thrown a cloud upon their faces, while their feelings ran in this fashion — “What has this to do with the kingdom of God? We want some manifest visible assurance that *that* kingdom has come

nigh unto us; 'we would see a sign from heaven.' All that this man has said to us, as yet, describes merely the relation of the teacher to the taught; there is no special reference to that kingdom which all our prophets have taught us to expect, the scene of its splendours, or the method of its growth. Why does He not tell us how He is going to establish it? Let Him take to Himself His great power and reign, that we may flock to His standard and crown Him king of the world." Perfectly true, there was no direct allusion made to the kingdom, no sure promise of its approach, and no explicit definition of its form; but, there was a prior truth, one that His hearers failed to recognise, one apart from which there can be no visible kingdom at all. Nevertheless, the Redeemer of the world, from His knowledge of what was in man, seems to compassionate this earnest cry of disappointment, and proceeds to show, that although the point of His first parable only referred indirectly to the establishment of His kingdom, and though the resemblance which He instituted only concerned that between the activity of seed and certain well-known realities of the spiritual world, and though it was used in the main to illustrate the responsibilities of the hearers of His gospel; yet the image itself was capable of new expansion. The parable of the sower might yield at His touch royal similitudes, and be made to give forth the trumpet-peal which would usher in the advent of their King. Therefore was it that He exclaimed,—"*So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground.*" That little word "so" appears to me to indicate that some conversation took place here, that some break had occurred in the thread of discourse, that some inquiry had been made, not unlike that which I have suggested, and which not only evoked the parable, but its Divine interpretation. Our Lord seems to say, "However striking may be the resemblance that exists between the sowing of seed upon different kinds of soil and the preaching of truth to men, there is a still more powerful resemblance possible between the action of seed and the establishment of the kingdom of God in the world." A clear perception of this purport of

the parable may remove a difficulty which suggests itself concerning the agency here represented by "THE MAN" who casts seed into the ground.

If the reference be simply to the agency made use of for the dissemination of divine truth, then the first part of the parable is quite comprehensible, but the last part becomes obscure. In what sense is "the man" who sows the seed to put in the sickle and gather in the ripened harvest? On the other hand, if "the Son of God," the true Lord of the harvest is indicated, how can it be said of Him that *He* knows not how the seed grows and germinates? This difficulty has perhaps arisen principally from failing to perceive, that it is not one single sowing of the seed, upon one class of hearers, that is spoken of here, but the whole of that sowing to the end of time—a sowing in which Christ participated for a short period during His earthly ministry, but which He then entrusted to those who had accepted His mission; while "the harvest" represents the final consummation of the kingdom, in which it will be His prerogative to act exclusively and alone. The image would have been obscure, if, when the great Teacher intended to indicate the mighty agency which should be employed for the establishment of the kingdom of God in the earth, He had made use of an illustration which in that period of history could have been applicable only to Himself, while He shows that the final development of the whole is pointed at by alluding to the great harvest, to the sickle of Divine Providence and Judgment, and to the granaries of heaven.

There are then more reasons than one for attending to the opening words of this parable, "And He said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground."

The parable as a whole suggests (1) The adaptation of the seed of the kingdom to the condition of humanity. (2) The law of its development. (3) The ultimate result.

I. The adaptation of the seed to the condition of humanity. "He said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day,

and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come."

Christ appears here to occupy the position of the first sower, He is the first link of the mighty chain of agency that He was calling into existence, by which the truth of God 'should be brought into contact with human hearts and human society. By "the ground," I conceive that He meant, not any individual mind, not any one assembly of minds, not any particular congregation or community, but the human race. He referred to all the instincts, habits, tastes, opinions, philosophies, and institutions of mankind, even to the uttermost limits of place and time, to the whole of that vast and complicated structure which can be directly or indirectly permeated and affected by the truth of God. Such a conception of the "ground" on which the seed of the kingdom would be cast, was adapted to draw the minds of His hearers away from their national prepossessions and prejudices. It would give them more comprehensive views of the true kingdom of God, if they could deign to accept the idea of a *kingdom* which was based upon *truth*, of the victories of a king which would be gained, not by armies, but by the proclamation of the amnesty of heaven, if they could appreciate the foundations of a kingdom laid by a process so apparently inconspicuous as the preaching of a great gospel. Christ teaches us that, in addition to all the mighty human impulses that are germinating in society, and to all the kingdoms that are arising in the world, independently of the sovereign power that exists inherently in the large conceptions and fertile discoveries and creative intelligences of every age, there is the seed of another kingdom, which is not of earthly origination nor of human creation, and which, where-soever it germinates, creates a province of the kingdom of God. "The kingdom of God is as if a man should cast seed into the ground." By a man casting seed into the ground, sleeping and rising night and day, and in ignorance of the processes

by which the seed springs up, Christ pointed to the whole of that human agency by which the truth of God shall be sown in the ground of humanity. It is indeed a divine seed of awful potency and glorious possibility, but the sowing of it is entrusted to human hands.

The germination and development of the kingdom of God in any class of institution, character, or thought must necessarily be effected through the exertion of its influence on individuals. Now the processes by which these things are accomplished are profound and often inscrutable. Nothing is more manifest to the sower of the seed, than the transformations which occur in individuals and communities under the influence of this truth; but where, when, and how the result has been produced, "he knoweth not." The effects can be traced, the results are patent, but the seed springs and grows up "he knoweth not how." Verily, all workers who *do* so much, and *know* so little, are virtually warned by this parable not to be searching at the roots, not to be over careful about results, nor self-tormented about the final issues of the sowing. As men, we know no more about these things than does the husbandman who has cast seed into the ground, and leaves the wondrous influences of sun and shade, of dew and zephyr, of frost and rain, to co-operate with the pent-up forces of the seed, and bring about the divinely predestinated result.

"Sleeping and rising night and day" simply alludes to the withdrawal from the scenes and avocations of daily life of the Christian worker. It tells us how the sower leaves his seed with God, incapable of taking another co-operative step in the process of its germination. There may be in it remote reference to the Son of Man as the Head of this human agency. If so, it was of His humanity that the parable speaks; and a dim prophecy perchance is involved of the solemn sleep of His death, a hint given even of His withdrawal to the scene where, though not constantly watching and tending the seed, He is engaged in pouring out the divine influence on which all results are dependent, by which alone they can be accomplished. It is only in this sense that *He* can be said to

leave the seed to itself; not indeed without the daily supply of His spiritual power, nor without the quickening sunbeams of His providential favour and the gently whispering breath of His Spirit; but, though "present" by the power of His Spirit, the manifestation of His humanity is suspended. He is hidden in the light of God. He would have us to understand that He is waiting for the results of His work, expecting the harvest of the world. So far as it is true that He will come again to us, He is now absent. In proportion to the fulness of His ultimate triumph and the glory of the final display of His interest in us, and of His great manifestation when every eye shall see Him, we must regard this intervening period, in which He is hiding Himself from our gaze, as an *absence*. He has gone His way. He will come again. We have no question at all that the harvest of the world will ripen, that the powers of conviction will become irresistible, that the manifestation of His true nature will eventually be so conspicuous and transcendent that every eye will see Him. But we cannot say this yet of any single generation, since the gates of heaven closed behind Him. If we contrast the ages of delay with the sublime fruition of all our prophetic hopes, we must say with the angels, "He is not here." The seed is sown, the great Sower is waiting to return to the harvest-field. Meanwhile, "the earth bringeth forth fruit of itself." In the earth there exist all the elements which subsequently contribute to the substance of the corn; in like manner there are existing in human minds capacities, ideas, feelings, and tendencies which are being reconstituted by the truth of God. Faculties and possibilities are lying dormant in human life and society, just as the carbon, nitrogen, and various salts that contribute to the material of the grain of wheat lie in the earth unused and unproductive; but when the power that can attract them from their lurking-places comes into contact with them, they organize, act, and re-act upon one another, and as they show the signs of combination and life, they prophesy a happy future.

The idea which Christ suggests here, is the exclusion of the

agency of the sower from this part of the mighty process. The heart of man finds in the truth of God something essentially adapted to give life to the dull, apparently inert, materials of which it is composed; human society finds in the truth of the Church of God the combining organizing power by which it is eventually to become the kingdom of God.

II. The parable is still further pregnant as it reveals the law of the development of the kingdom of God. "First the blade, then the ear, after that, the full corn in the ear." This is a beautiful illustration of the different stages of spiritual growth, somewhat akin to the division by the Apostle John into "little children," "young men," and "fathers;" and by the law of interpretation which we think we have discovered, we are bound to consider it the law of the progress of this new life in the history of man and in the records of God's Church; yet the exhibition of this law on the grand scale is the consequence of its truth in the history of every individual man who brings forth fruit with patience. It is because fresh life and infant life is poured into our world every day, that the whole world is ever young; it is because there are always children among us, learning the results of previous centuries of toil and labour and discovery, that the whole race is ever advancing; it is because there are young men who combine the vigour of youth with the resolution of age, the fire of enterprise with the calm maturity of fruition, that the world is ever strong, and marches forward towards the fulness of its prime. And it is because we see everywhere God's master-work, man, the man of mature years with his strength and his knowledge, his wild fancies converted into the energy of imagination, his hasty prejudices chastened or uprooted, or in some cases perhaps dignified into well-reasoned opinions, his character rich with virtues, and his whole existence bearing witness to the life he has lived, that we anticipate the day when the entire human race shall have reached such a manhood, when the toils, illusions, and disappointments of the world's youth, the discoveries of centuries, the failures and martyrdoms encountered in the prolonged search after truth, shall issue in

the full communion of humanity with nature, and the blessedness of the bridal between heaven and earth.

That which happens in the great world of men becomes a parable and type of the Church and kingdom of God on earth. The birth-cry is ever sounding, babes in Christ are being born continually into the kingdom. The regeneration of men is not a dream, but a blessed reality. The little children of grace, with their new fresh energy of wondrous beauty, their youthful charm and hopefulness, as yet the victim of no heart-breaking disappointment, souls sanguine but yet docile, make and keep the Church of God always young. Moreover, new fields of holy service are always being covered with the spring verdure of newborn hope. The Church has never yet lacked the ardour of fresh enterprise, the charm of new anticipations, the inspiration of the young life of the newly born.

Similarly the Church takes a character, as the world does, from its fully-developed life. To every heart in which Divine life has been implanted, there must come the hour of conflict, of struggle, of temptation, of doubt, of fear; when faith trembles, and the first credulous confidence of the child is staggered by the cynical and sceptical voices of the unregenerate world; when that which is taken on trust has to be proved to the satisfaction of the intellect; when youthful glories of childlike faith become the intuitions of divine certitude; when, after having believed that it might know, a higher experience believes because it knows; when manhood, strength, experience, fruitfulness, characterize the Christian life. What is true of the individual gives a character to the whole Church. The kingdom of God is always youthful, but it is also always manly. It has always been characterised by childlike simplicity, but it is always throwing off the follies of childhood. It presents, like the tropical fruit-tree, at one and the same time the tender green of spring, the expanding blossom of summer, and the ripening fruit.

It would be well for the critics of the infantine simplicity of the faith of God's elect, to look more steadily at the manly force and vigour with which the Church is ever being taught

of God, to discard its own prejudices, to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. It would be equally wise for those who are trembling at the signs of its vigour and aghast at its claim of glorious liberty, to turn and see how fresh and beautiful and untarnished are the buddings of its early promise, and the childlike ways that "mark the newly born."

Once more, the man of God at last weathers all the influences adverse to his faith. He becomes a "Father in Christ Jesus." The hour arrives when old temptations are powerless and the perplexities of his prime have vanished, when the fascination and exaggerated importance of this world dwindle into insignificance and its pleasures fade away before the brightening vision of heaven. Then hoary hairs become a crown of righteousness, and we see standing on the shore of the river of death a goodly company attired for their passage, catching on their brows the reflected light of heaven. Our eyes brighten as we see them, for they give an earnest and prophecy of that condition of the CHURCH when the last conversion shall have taken place; when none shall need to say to his brother, 'Know the Lord,' when all shall know Him from the least to the greatest; when Jew and Greek shall have ceased their contentions; when Paul and John shall have finished their work; when no Stephen and no Polycarp shall need to seal a testimony with blood, and no mere worldly patronage shall threaten the spirituality of the kingdom of Christ; when the last conflict with Antichrist shall have been victoriously completed, and the whole world shall have become one vast company of fervent diligent workers; when the silver cords of prayer which bind this world to the throne of God shall contract, and earth, with its mighty burden of harmonious sympathies, shall rise—rise heavenward, until all that intervenes between time and the beatific vision of eternity shall be the thin transparent glass of those few moments of probation which yet await those "that are alive and remain," and which the trumpet of the Archangel shall shiver into fragments.

"First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the

ear," is the law of development for the kingdom as well as the man.

III. The parable exhibits in the circumstances of the harvest the ultimate issues of the kingdom. "When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is ripe."

It is true of the man, and true of the kingdom of God as a whole.

When the whole fruitage of the Divine life is complete, the great Lord of the harvest, who alone has the power of life and death, puts forth His sickle. He alone knows the reaping time for souls. With Him are the issues of life. He uses His power over all flesh, and His dominion over all souls, with sublime independence of our foolish criticism, with infinite tenderness and perfect wisdom. When the fruit is brought forth, then He puts in the sickle. Sometimes the young and tender plant shows all its fruit, and He sees all its possibilities, accepts graciously unfulfilled intentions, and garners the very promise of a glorious summer. But there are those who bring forth fruit in old age; and not till they have finished all their course does He take them into His arms and reap the shock of corn fully ripe. And we may rest assured that the great harvest of the world will be reaped by the same command, when the hour of its full fruitage shall have struck. He waits patiently. Henceforth He expects. He will see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

Far from us be the dastardly fear that the harvest of the world will never ripen, that the difficulties in its way are insurmountable, that the rampant growth of Oriental heathenism will never give way, that the blight of scepticism will devour all the flower of the field, that the powers of the world will trample all the golden grain into dust. God has eternity to work in, and can wait; but the day will dawn when the harvest will be ready to His hand, and then *immediately* He will put in the sickle, not to destroy our hope, but to fulfil His promise.

H. R. REYNOLDS, D.D.

President of Cheshunt College.

The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone philologically through this **TEXTUS**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) The **HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3) The **ARGUMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) The **HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately educed, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

No. C.

Revelations of the Good and Bad in Human Nature.

"DELIVER ME FROM MINE ENEMIES," etc.—*Psalm lix. 1-17.*

HISTORY.—The title ascribes this Psalm to David, and there is no reason for doubting the authorship. It also indicates the occasion "When Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him." The record of this event we have in 1 Sam. xix. 11. As to the period when this Psalm was composed, whether it was in prospect or retrospect of the event, no one can determine. The general title is the same as the two preceding ones, and is dedicated like them to the chief musician. Dr. Murphy renders the title thus: "To the precentor. Destroy not. By David. A scroll. When Saul sent and they watched the house to kill him."

ANNOTATIONS: Ver. 1.—"Deliver

me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me" (my assailants). David knew that Saul had in his court those who were prepared to second the monarch in his efforts to destroy him. Hence he says, enemies.

Ver. 2.—"*Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men*" (or men of blood). His assailants not only wrought iniquity, but were violent and sanguinary.

Ver. 3.—"*For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O Lord.*" He means to say, that on all hands they watched for his ruin, and that not because he had done them

any injury. He had never done Saul an injury, on the contrary he had behaved as his friend.

Ver. 4.—“*They run and prepare themselves without my fault.*” In savage eagerness they pursued him, and that not because of any fault in him. He had ever sought the king's welfare. “*Awake to help me, and behold.*” Some render it “*Awake to meet me,*” that is, with friendly aid. This is a prayer that God should come to him and render help.

Ver. 5.—“*Thou therefore, O Lord God of Hosts, the God of Israel.*” “*Lord God of Hosts*” means the God of armies. Armies of heaven and earth, of physical forces and moral intelligences. “*Awake to visit all the heathen.*” He means all the nations, all those who are not of Israel and who by the Hebrews were considered to be pre-eminently corrupt and reprobate. “*Be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.*” Here is imprecation again. Such a spirit as is expressed in this clause cannot, as we have seen, be justified on any rational ground.

Ver. 6.—“*They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.*” Not able to execute their malignant purposes on him by day, they return at night, they howl like a dog eager for their prey, and go round the city.

Ver. 7.—“*Behold, they belch out with their mouth: swords are in their lips,*” etc. Their boiling rage breaks forth in their language. Malice flows in copious streams from their lips, and “*swords are in their lips.*” Their words were like swords, most cutting.

Ver. 8.—“*But Thou, O Lord, shalt laugh at them; Thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.*” This means, Thou shalt treat them with scorn and contempt. He seems confident that all the

efforts of his enemies would be frustrated.

Ver. 9.—“*Because of his strength will I wait upon Thee.*” Whose strength? That of God's or that of David's enemy? The latter, we think, is meant—the strength of Saul and his followers. “*For God is my defence.*” He means, because of the might of my enemies my only defence is in God.

Ver. 10.—“*The God of my mercy shall prevent me: God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies.*” The word “*prevent*” means going before; and the idea here seems to be, that the merciful God would go in advance of him and defeat his enemies.

Ver. 11.—“*Slay them not, lest my people forget.*” “*My people.*” Whose people? David's loyal friends. On their behalf he asks the Almighty to delay punishment, lest they should forget. Forget what? God's displeasure towards sin. “*Scatter them by Thy power; and bring them down, O Lord our shield.*” Do not terminate their existence, but curse them with the curse of Cain; let them be wanderers on the earth as a warning to others.

Ver. 12.—“*For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips let them even be taken in their pride: and for cursing and lying which they speak.*” Let retribution seize them on account of their corrupt speech.

Ver. 13.—“*Consume them in wrath, consume them, that they may not be: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah.*” Unwarrantable and reprehensible imprecation again.

Ver. 14.—“*And at evening let them return; and let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.*” A repetition of ver. 6.

Ver. 15.—“*Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied.*” They prowl about like ravenous beasts of

prey in order to devour, and will even stay all night in order to appease their malignant hunger.

Ver. 16.—“*But I will sing of Thy power ; yea, I will sing aloud of Thy mercy in the morning : for Thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.*” “*But I.*” This is emphatic : and is put in contrast to the spirit of the ungodly. Although they do not praise Thee, I will. I will sing of Thy strength, a strength infinitely surpassing that of the enemy. “*In the morning*” when the enemy is frustrated and I am beyond their reach.

Ver. 17.—“*Unto Thee, O my strength, will I sing : for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy.*” An echo of the former verse.

ARGUMENT.—“The whole psalm consists of two parts, each of which falls into two sub-divisions. In the first part, five verses contain a prayer for deliverance and five an expression of confidence in the Deliverer. In the second part, three verses contain a prayer for the defeat of the enemy and four a strain of thanksgiving.”—Dr. Murphy.

HOMILETICS.—Homiletically, this psalm may be looked upon as a revelation of three things : *the enmity of man towards man, the appeal of selfishness to Heaven, and the confidence of piety in God.*

I. THE ENMITY OF MAN TOWARDS MAN. Throughout the whole of this psalm David refers to his enemies. He describes them, denounces them, and prays against them. Man was made to love man. His social nature, the benevolence of God, the law of relationship and interdependence, and the teaching of the Bible, show that men were made to be banded together in the bond of loving brotherhood. But somehow this normal state has been utterly destroyed. Instead of social unity there are social divisions and antagonisms, and man almost everywhere is the enemy of his brother. Man is the tormentor, the fiend, the devil of man. Well-nigh all the sorrows, agonies, and distresses that afflict us come to us from our fellow-men. From the description that David here gives of his enemies, we learn that (1) They hated him with a *deadly hate*. They sought nothing less than his life ; they were “bloody men.” (2) They hated him *without a cause*. “Without my fault.” It nowhere appears that David had been guilty of any conduct, either towards Saul or his followers, that would justify their enmity. Men often hate their fellow-creatures without a cause. Some of the most innocent, pure, noble, useful men have been martyred. It was thus with the old prophets, the

apostles, and with Christ Himself. (3) They hated him with *furios rage*. They are represented as furious beasts of prey, as ravenous dogs, as malignant slanderers, whose words are cutting as a "sword," from whose mouth belches the lava of abuse. (4) They hated him with *persistent effort*. They watch in the day, wait in ambush, return at night, and thus on until their fiendish purposes are attained.

Such are the enemies that David here describes; and few men, however good, pass through life without being assailed by furious foes and men of this type. The fact that men are thus enemies to men,—

First: Argues human apostasy. Such a social state as this (as we have already intimated) could not have been the original and normal one. At some time or other there has happened in human life a moral earthquake which has riven the social body into pieces. The fact,—

Secondly: Reveals the need of Christ. Who can subdue this enmity, heal the social divisions, unite men again in one great brotherhood? There is but One, and that is Christ. He reconciles man to man by reconciling all men to God.

This psalm may be looked upon as exhibiting—

II. THE APPEAL OF SELFISHNESS TO HEAVEN. Here David prays; but what is the character of his prayer? Does he pray for purity of heart, for assimilation to the Divine image, for power to be useful in the world, for thorough acquiescence in the Divine will? Alas! no. This prayer is of a different and far lower type. Some of the vilest passions of human nature often go out in prayer—envy, jealousy, revenge, greed. David often prayed well; but here he prayed selfishly and revengefully.

First: He prays for *deliverance from danger*. "Deliver me from mine enemies, defend me from those that rise against me," etc. It is all *me*: deliver *me*, defend *me*, save *me*, help *me*. Is there any moral virtue in such a prayer as this? Is it not such a prayer that the most worthless soul on earth would breathe forth in the hour of danger?

Secondly : He prays for the *ruin of his enemies*. "Be not merciful to any wicked transgressors." . . . "Scatter them by Thy power." . . . "Bring them down, O Lord." . . . "Let them be taken in their pride, consume them in wrath." What merit is there in such a prayer as this ? Can it ever meet acceptance with that God who willeth not the death of a sinner, and who is not "willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" ? If this is true prayer, who does not pray ? What man, however impious, does not at times offer such a prayer as this ?

This psalm may be looked upon as exhibiting,—

III. THE CONFIDENCE OF PIETY IN GOD. Despite all the imperfections of David's character, the root of the matter was in him. He had piety, and this piety here expresses itself in his confidence in God's mercy and God's strength to deliver. Hence he says, "I will sing aloud of Thy mercy in the morning, for Thou hast been my refuge in the day of my trouble."

CONCLUSION.—There is not a "just man on earth that doeth good and sinneth not." In the best of men elements of depravity are discoverable. When the fires of piety have consumed them, then, and not till then, the soul is meetened for the higher world. Paul says, "I *count* not myself to have apprehended ; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God the Father." Perfection of character is only gradually reached. "The acorn" it has been said, "does not become an oak in a day ; the ripened scholar was not made such by a single lesson ; the well-trained soldier was not a raw recruit yesterday ; it is not one touch of the artist's pencil that produces a finished painting ; there are always months between seed-time and harvest ; even so, the path of the just is like the 'shining light' which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF JOB.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering; but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

No. LXIV.

Job's Self-Vindication (*continued*).

"I MADE A COVENANT WITH MINE EYES," etc.—*Job xxxi. 1-40.*

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—See last volume, page 419.

HOMILETICS.—This chapter gives an insight into the Patriarch's MORALITY: We learn from it,—

I. His THEORY of morality. We learn that his theory implied, (1) That all moral conduct, whether good or bad, is to be determined by the will of God. Throughout this chapter he describes his own conduct, deprecates vices, and claims virtues, all with an eye to the Supreme. He says, "What portion of God is there from above? . . . Doth not He see my ways, and count all my steps? . . . What then shall I do when God riseth up?" Such utterances show how profoundly he felt that God was the Judge of moral character. In this view he was at once scientific and evangelical. Moral character apart from God can have no existence. His being is the foundation and His will the standard of all moral actions. His theory implied, (2) That moral conduct includes states of mind as well as overt acts. "Why then should I *think* upon a maid? . . . If my foot hath hasted to deceit. . . . If mine heart walked after mine eyes. . . . If I did despise the cause of my manservant. . . . If I have made gold my hope. . . . If I rejoiced because my wealth was great. . . . If mine heart have been secretly enticed.

. . . If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me." Here are *mental* states, and to these states he attached a moral quality. Herein, too, his theory of morality agrees with the conclusions of reason and the teachings of Christ, Who traced both vice and virtue to states of mind as their root and fount. God holds a man responsible, not only for what he does *by* the body, but what he does *in* the body as well. All the elements of moral character are generated silently and unseen in the body. His theory implied (3) That all moral conduct must be followed by retribution. "Is not destruction to the wicked? . . . What then shall I do when God riseth up?" Retribution follows all moral conduct as the tides follow the moon. "Be sure your sins will find you out."

Where did he get this *theory* of morality? Christ had not come: nor had the law gone forth in thunder from Sinai, and he was outside of that Hebrew sphere where kind Heaven gave its special revelations of duty and doctrine. There is a light of nature by which men can learn their obligations, and in which some have learnt them and discharged them too. Ignorance and its sister bigotry damn the millions who have not a special revelation from God, as morally benighted and accursed. Plato, Socrates, Seneca, are all accursed. We learn from this chapter,—

II. His PRACTICE of morality. Most solemnly does he deprecate and deny on his own behalf any immorality (1) In relation to *women*. "I made a covenant with mine eyes, why then should I think upon a maid?" Again, "If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door; then let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her." How he denounces all unchaste feeling, and adulterous desires as well as acts. He pronounces such to be an "iniquity to be punished by the judges," and declares that all such conduct is "a fire that consumeth to destruction." Lasciviousness is ruinous to the human constitution. No one vice, perhaps, pours such desolation into the soul. Dr. Barnes says on this point:—"An intelligent gentleman and a careful observer of the state of things in society,

once remarked to me, that on coming to the city of Philadelphia, it was his fortune to be in the same boarding house with a number of young men nearly all of whom were known to be of licentious habits. He has lived to watch their course of life; and he remarked that there was not one of them who did not ultimately show that he was essentially corrupt and unprincipled in every department of morals. There is not any one propensity of man that spreads such a withering influence over the soul as this; and however it may be accounted for, it is certain that indulgence in this vice is a certain evidence that no reliance is to be placed on the man's virtue in any respect or in reference to any relation of life."

Most solemnly does he deprecate and deny on his own behalf any immorality (2) In relation to *his servants*. "If I did despise the cause of my manservant or of my maidservant when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? . . . Did not He that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?" Here he declares (A) That he always dealt fairly with his servants. Never despised their just claims, but listened with candour to their grievances. He allowed them to contend with him when they had a case, or thought they had one, and he did not despise them. (B) Because he regarded them as having the same nature as himself. "Did not He that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?" "God hath made of one blood all nations of men." The haughty aristocrat and the imperial despot treat menials as if they were of a lower origin and inferior mould: hence slavery. But Job belonged to that high race of humanity which honour all men as the offspring of a common Father and partakers of a common nature. Most solemnly does he deprecate and deny on his own behalf any immorality (3) In relation to *the poor*. "If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; (for from my youth he was brought up with me as with a father, and I have guided her from my mother's

womb;) if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone." Job regarded practical commiseration for the poor as a moral obligation. Succouring and relieving the poor is regarded even by the professed followers of Christ as a mere question of option, and not of urgent duty. But neglect of the claims of the poor is one of the foulest crimes. Job felt this, and hence he says, "If I have not done so . . . let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone." God says, "Thou shalt open thine hand wide to thy brethren, to the poor and the needy in the land." How few in Christian England obey this Divine command! Were our landlords, our nobles, our rulers to attend to this, how little pauperism there would be. The existence of pauperism in our land demonstrates that our Christianity to a great extent is but an empty profession, an impious sham. Most solemnly does he deprecate and deny on his own behalf any immorality (4) In relation to his *objects of worship*. He disclaims any worship of (A) *His property*. "If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; if I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much." He had no mercenary feeling, no sordid love. Wealth was no idol of his, he was no worshipper of mammon. Alas! the god that this old patriarch disclaims is the popular god of Christendom. The vast majority of men kneel at the altar of mammon, and there pour out their souls. He disclaims any worship of (B) *Natural objects*. "If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand." If a man could be justified for worshipping any material object in the universe short of God, it would be the sun—central, mighty, imperial, refulgent, the life-generator of worlds. But Job de-

precates such worship, and denies that he had ever been guilty of it. His heart was never "enticed" to it in worship, neither did he kiss his hand to it in homage. Most solemnly does he deprecate and deny on his own behalf any immorality (5) In relation to his *enemies*. "If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him: neither have I suffered my mouth to sin by wishing a curse to his soul. If the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied." He had no revenge, he did not return evil for evil, he did not curse; but, according to the command of Christ, he blessed his enemies. How far professed Christians fall below the old patriarch in this respect! They feel themselves justified in shunning their enemies, treating them with contempt, and even wreaking vengeance on their heads. They have no sense of the obligation to bless them. This is the new commandment which they outrage, but which this old patriarch, who lived 5000 years ago, in a land without any special revelation, practically recognised as binding. Most solemnly does he deprecate and deny on his own behalf any immorality (6) In relation to *strangers*. "The stranger did not lodge in the street: but I opened my doors to the traveller." He recognises the obligation of being kind and hospitable to men from other regions and with whom he had no acquaintance—the strange wayfarer. He felt it his duty to supply their necessities to the extent of his ability; hospitality to strangers he practised in common with all the good men of patriarchal times. We, forsooth, living in the meridian of the Christian dispensation, have no practical sense of duty on this question; and yet how clearly it is the law of God, and how strongly and clearly it was enforced by Christ. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Most solemnly does he deprecate and deny on his own behalf any immorality (7) In relation to *hypocrisy*. "If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom: did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families terrify me, that I kept silence, and

went not out of the door?" He means to say, that if, after the manner of men, I have endeavoured to misrepresent myself, make myself appear better than I am, then let me be confounded before the great multitude. Let me never show my face or speak a word any more. The sense is perhaps expressed by Patrick. "If I have studied to appear better than I am, and have not made a free confession, but, like our first parents, have concealed or excused my faults, and out of self-love have hidden mine iniquity, because I dread what the people will say of me, or am terrified by the contempt into which the knowledge of my guilt will bring me with the neighbouring families, then am I content my mouth should be stopped, and that I never stir out of my door any more." As a still stronger proof of his sincerity, he exclaims, "Oh that one would hear me! Behold, my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine adversary had written a book. Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me. I would declare unto him the number of my steps; as a prince would I go near unto him." He appeals to Omniscience as his judge, and challenges his adversary to write a book, and to make any charges he has against him on this score. Of such a book he would not be ashamed, but would carry it about with him, he would go with it with the calmness of a prince, with the serene majesty of conscious innocence. "It must be remembered," says a modern expositor, "that all this is said with reference to the charges which had been brought against him by his friends, and not as claiming absolute perfection. He was accused of gross hypocrisy, and it was maintained that he was suffering the judicial infliction of Heaven on account of that. So far as those charges were concerned he now says that he could go before God with the firm and elastic tread of a prince, with entire cheerfulness and boldness. We are not, however, to suppose that he did not regard himself as having the common infirmities of our fallen nature. The discussion does not turn at all on that point." Most solemnly does he deprecate and deny on his own behalf any immorality (8) In relation to

his conduct as a *land proprietor*. "If my land cry against me, or that the furrows likewise thereof complain; if I have eaten the fruits thereof without money, or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life: let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley." He declares he had not taken possession of any man's land by violence, nor had he cultivated it without paying for its use, so that it could not metaphorically cry out against him. Had he done so he desires that on his own soil there should spring up thistles instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley.

Such is the insight we have into Job's morality—both his morality in theory and his morality in practice. His theory astonishes us at his advanced intelligence, an ethical intelligence touching even the Christian point; and his practice, as solemnly avowed by himself, commends him to our highest esteem as an upright man "one that feared God and eschewed evil."

CONCLUSION.—The words of Delitzsch may be quoted as a judicious summary of the whole chapter. "The poet allows us to gain a clear insight into that state of his hero's heart and also of his house which was well-pleasing to God. Not merely outward—adultery, even the adulterous look; not merely the unjust acquisition of property and goods, but even the confidence of the heart in such things; not merely the shame of an open adoration of idols, but even the side glance of the heart after them, is accounted by him as condemnatory. He has not merely guarded himself from using sinful curses against his enemies, but he has also not rejoiced when misfortune overtook them. As to his servants, even when he has had a dispute with any of them, he has not forgotten that master and servants, without distinction of birth, are creatures of one God. Towards orphans, from early youth onwards he has practised such tender love as if he were their father; towards widows, as if he were their son. With the hungry he has shared his bread, with the naked his clothes; his subordinates had no reason to complain of niggardly sustenance; his door always stood open hospitably to the stranger;

and, as the two final strophes affirm, he has not hedged in any secret sin, anxious only not to appear as a sinner openly, and has not drawn forth wailings and tears from the ground which he cultivated by avarice and oppressive injustice. Who does not here recognise a righteousness of life and endeavour, the final aim of which is purity of heart, and which in its relation to man flows forth in that love which is the fulfilling of the law? The righteousness of which Job (ch. xxix. 14) says he has put it on like a garment, and it has put him on, is essentially the same as that which the New Testament Preacher on the Mount enjoins. As the work of an Israelitish poet, this chapter is a most important evidence in favour of the assertion that a life well-pleasing to God is not, even in the Old Testament, absolutely limited to the Israelitish nation, and that it enjoins a love which includes man as man within itself, and knows of no distinction."

SERMONIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dorner; Lange; etc., etc.

No. LXIV.

The Rationale of Unbelief.

"AND BECAUSE I TELL YOU THE TRUTH, YE BELIEVE ME NOT. WHICH OF YOU CONVINCETH ME OF SIN? AND IF I SAY THE TRUTH, WHY DO YE NOT BELIEVE ME? HE THAT IS OF GOD HEARETH GOD'S WORDS: YE THEREFORE HEAR THEM NOT, BECAUSE YE ARE NOT OF GOD. THEN ANSWERED THE JEWS, AND SAID UNTO HIM, SAY WE NOT WELL THAT THOU ART A SAMARITAN, AND HAST A DEVIL?"—*John* viii. 45-48.

EXPOSITION: Ver 45.—"*And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.*" Here Christ tells the Jews that, like their diabolic father, they were out of sympathy

with truth and would not believe Him who spoke the truth.

Ver. 46.—"*Which of you convinceth* [*ἐλέγχει*, rather convicteth] *me of*

sin?" What does He mean by sin (*ἀμαρτία*) here—mere intellectual error, or moral falsehood and wrong? He means, I presume, sin in its widest sense—all that is untrue in thought, improper in feeling, wrong in life. Which of you convicteth me of *any* sin, either of judgment, feeling, speech, or act? Perhaps Christ means here to say, I am free from any moral wrongness, and therefore could not be untruthful. "And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" "If I speak truth, why do ye not believe me?"—*Davidson*. Since you cannot find anything morally wrong in me, it is clear that I only speak the truth; and if I do, why do not ye believe me?

Ver. 47.—"*He that is of God heareth God's words.*" "A syllogism; but not with this conclusion: I now speak God's words (*De Wette*); but you are not of God. That Jesus speaks the word of God is presupposed in the foregoing. An attentive hearing and reception of the word of God is

meant. This is conditioned by being from God, by moral relationship with God; for only kindred can know kindred. The being of God has been more particularly characterized as a being drawn by God (chap. vi. 44), being taught by Him (ver. 45), as showing itself by doing truth in God (chap. iii. 21)."—*Lange*. "Ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." It is because you have no moral affinity with God, no sympathy with Him, that you hear Him not.

Ver. 48.—"*Then answered the Jews, and said unto Him, Say we not well that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?*" "What intense and virulent scorn! The 'Say we not well' is a reference to their former charge, Thou hast a devil (chap. vii. 20). 'Samaritan,' here, means more than no Israelite at all. It means one who pretended but had no manner of claim to connection with Abraham, retorting perhaps His denial of their true descent from the father of the faithful."—*Dr. Brown*.

HOMILETICS.—These words help to give us an insight into the *rationale of unbelief*. There are five things discoverable in these words, which go a great way toward the generating and sustaining of unbelief in the Gospel.

I. REPUGNANCE TO THE TRUTH. "Because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not." If He had given them popular dogmas or speculative disquisitions, they might have believed in Him; but He gave them truth—**REALITY**. And the truth He gave them was not intellectual and speculative, but moral and regulative—truth that addressed itself with an imperial force to the central nerves of their being. They were living in falsehood, appearances, and shams, far away from the awful region of spiritual realities. This truth came in direct collision with their associations, their prepossessions, their pride, their interests, their habits; it was therefore repugnant to them, and they would not have it.

First: Man's repugnance to truth reveals his *abnormal condition*. His soul is as truly organized for truth as the eyes are organized for light. Truth is its natural atmosphere, natural scenery, natural beverage, natural food.

Secondly: Man's repugnance to truth suggests his *awful future*. The soul and truth will not always be kept apart. The time must come in the case of every man, when the intervening fictions and falsehoods shall melt away as clouds, when the interspace gulf shall be bridged over, and when the soul shall feel itself in vivid, conscious, eternal contact with moral realities.

Another thing discoverable in this passage is,—

II. THE PURITY OF CHRIST. "Which of you convinceth me of sin?"* Christ is the substance of the truth, the truth itself; and His invincible intolerance to all sin, and His refulgent purity, repel the depraved heart. "Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." The first beams of morning are not half so uninviting and repulsive to the midnight burglar, as the moral rays of Christ's truth are to a corrupt heart. Moral purity makes the hell of depravity. Its effulgent beams, as they fall directly on the elements of moral corruption in the soul, kindle up the unquenchable flames of gehenna. We discover in this passage,—

III. ESTRANGEMENT FROM GOD. "He that is of God heareth God's words." "Of God" in a moral sense, born of God, having the true filial sympathies warm and regnant. Such sympathies are essential to true faith. The more love a child has in him, the more credulous he is in relation to the utterances of his parent. Men in their unregenerate state have not this sympathy. Hence their unbelief. They do not like to retain God in all their thoughts. Love is the foundation of all true faith. I only believe in a man in proportion to the strength of my love for him; and I can only trust God as I love Him. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love."

* See Ullman, on the "*Sinlessness of Jesus*," published in 1863.

Another thing discoverable in this passage is,—

IV. PRIDE OF INTELLECT. "Then answered the Jews, and said unto Him, Say we not well that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" They had said this before (viii. 20), and here they pride themselves on their sagacity. "Say we not well." Are we not clever? Can we not discern spirits? What insight we have into character! How we can peer into the springs of action! We cannot be deceived. Is not this ever the spirit of unbelief? Infidels have ever been too scientific to believe in miracles, too philosophic to require a special revelation, too independent to require even the priestly aid of Christ, too moral to need any inward reformation. "Say we not well?" This is their spirit. It comes out in their books, in their lectures, in their converse with their fellow-men, and in their daily life. We are the wise men, and wisdom will die with us. This pride is essentially inimical to true faith. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

Another thing discoverable in the passage is,—

V. UNCHARITABLENESS OF DISPOSITION. "Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil." Suppose He was a Samaritan: are not Samaritans men, and have they not a claim to human sympathy? Are all Samaritans bad, and are there none good amongst the thousands? All Samaritans have devils. Thou art a Samaritan, therefore Thou hast a devil. This was their uncharitable reasoning, and it has ever characterized infidelity. All Christians are hypocrites, all preachers are crafty mercenaries, all Churches are nurseries of superstition, all ecclesiastics are cunning worldlings, robing themselves in sanctity and fattening on the toils of the millions: hence we will have nothing to do with this Christianity. Far enough are we from wishing men to believe in the corrupt, the crafty, and the vile. True charity is often rigorous in its criticism, and inexorable in its denunciations of wrong. True charity is never blind; it is all eye. Uncharitableness is evermore a barrier to faith, for it is always suspicious, and loses the power of trusting. "Infidelity," says Robert Hall, "is the

joint offspring of an irreligious temper and unholy speculation, employed, not in examining the evidences of Christianity, but in detecting the vices and imperfections of professing Christians."

CONCLUSION.—Such are some of the causes of unbelief; and perhaps those causes were never more rampant in any age or land than now and here. Years ago, Sharon Turner, a high-class thinker and distinguished author, summed up infidelity in the following words: "It is the champion of matter against mind—of body against spirit—of the senses against the reason—of passions against duty—of self-interest against self-government—of dissatisfaction against content—of the present against the future—of the little that is known against all that is unknown—of our limited experience against boundless possibility."

The Preacher's Germs of Thought.

The Lord a Shepherd.

"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD."—Ps. xxiii. 1.

THESE words were written at a critical period in the history of the Psalmist—during the rebellion under Absalom. He is *opposed*. The leader of the faction is his own son. Before this enraged company he flees into the wilderness. His position is a painful one; but, like a wise man, he remembers that the picture has a *bright* as well as a *dark* side. He looks at the bright side; and the thoughts engendered by the look are put before us in this psalm. In considering this text we learn,—

I. That God gives His people NOURISHMENT. One of the first duties of an Eastern shepherd, was to provide ample pasture for the flock, to lead them hither and thither that *plenty* might be found. The Lord, as David's Shepherd, would make provision for his necessities. And not for David only, but for all His people "the Lord will provide." We have here,—

1. *A repudiation of Naturalism.* The advocates of this system maintain, that though God made the world, and its noblest inhabitant—man, He now feels no interest in the work of His hands. “He is so *great*,” say they, “that it would be beneath Him to notice the little things of earth, or the concerns of man.” The *love, compassion, and Fatherly* goodness of God are here ignored. A meagre view of the Divine Character is this. God is a Shepherd, and will never neglect His flock. We have here,—

2. *A truth to which God has pledged Himself.* God cares for less important creatures than man—the blade of grass, the lily, the sparrow. If He clothe and feed the *lower*, He will not forget the higher; and therefore we ought not to be unduly anxious about these things, but trust in God (Matt. vi. 24-34).

II. That God gives His people PROTECTION.

It was as really the duty of the shepherd to protect his flock from harm, as to supply them with food. Fierce beasts prowled about, and sought to tear and slay; and it was the mark of a good shepherd that he was not intimidated by the approach of the wolf, etc. He would even expose himself to danger for the safety of his flock. David did, when he grappled with the *lion* and the *bear*. God protects His people.

1. The good have enemies. (a) *Numerous.* (b) *Cunning.* (c) *Powerful.* “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” Other foes are about the path of the good; and dangers of almost every description surround them here.

2. The Great Shepherd is engaged to protect them. (a) He protects their *bodies*. He gives “His Angels charge,” etc. (b) He gives *spiritual* protection. He is—to change the figure—a “Shield.” “A wall of fire” etc. God is “*more than all*” who are against His people.

III. That God gives His people REST. The shepherd led his flock to some place where rest might be found—from the scorching sun at noon-day, and from the keen air of the midnight hour. So God, as a Shepherd, will give His fol-

lowers rest. (a) *Here*. From storm *within*, and from oppression etc. *without*. (b) *Hereafter*. He will take His own to be in His presence for ever. Learn,—

1. The importance of being “the sheep of His pasture.” Only those who are such have any claim to this *Provision*, *Protection*, and *Rest*.

2. The value of *trust* in Him who has condescended to sustain to us these gracious relationships.

JOHN HILL.

Christian Magnanimity.

“LET YOUR MODERATION BE KNOWN UNTO ALL MEN.”—*Phil.* iv. 5.

IN interpreting Scripture, the chief thing is to get at the mind of the Spirit, to discover the sense in which inspired men used language. Otherwise, we may be looking in one direction while some suggestive word in a text looks in another. For full sight of any object much depends on the angle of vision.

Here, the word “moderation” is not directed against excess in eating, drinking, in the love of pleasure, money, or of anything of that order. The word “moderation” comes from a root which means “to yield.” Hence, it allies itself in New Testament usage with acts of gracious and graceful *concession*. It means forbearance, leniency, gentleness, and clemency; the opposite of all that is hard and rigorous. Where law is on your side, yet to abstain from pressing the full claims of justice. For the exacter meaning, see Acts xxiv. 4; 2 Cor. x. 1, according to which, “Let your gentleness and forbearance be known” would be true to the text and would remind one of Matthew Arnold’s “sweet reasonableness of Christ.”

I. WHEN TO DISPLAY CHRISTIAN FORBEARANCE.

1. *In dealing with Enemies and Slanderers*. You may have none. Others may be grievously wronged in character, property—slandered, subject to petty persecutions and incessant depreciations, etc.

If the offender comes into your power, how easy it is to make out a case for just resentment! The offence was unpro-

voked; he deserves punishment, impunity will encourage its repetition, &c., &c.

For a fine illustration of forbearance, see David's noble conduct to Saul (1 Sam. xxiv. 11-19).

2. *Ecclesiastical Offences.* A man sins against orthodoxy. Too often there is no attempt to understand his peculiarities. He is weighed and found wanting; forthwith he is accused, condemned, and subject to ecclesiastical ostracism! Paul met with much that was not orthodox in the Churches, but he made allowance. Christ said, "He that is not against us, is for us."

3. *Treatment of Debtors.* Commercial life. Sometimes there is a wretch who lends money at a ruinous rate of interest, splices his little loop of law around his victim, waits his opportunity like a wild beast in his lair, and when the day of difficulty comes, pounces on his victim with, "Pay me what thou owest." See similar grasping hardness sketched in Matt. viii. 28.

On the other hand, true christian leniency is not seldom exhibited by men of the world.

Bankruptcy, and a company of creditors. Law is on their side, of course. But when they see the wreck of fortune, the impending destitution of wife and family, they forego their rights and by generous dealing make their moderation known.

4. *Treatment of Workers.* The rules and regulations of a factory are very stringent. Rightly enough, for in a company of men what can you do without order? Laws the most exact pervade all nature. Yes. System, however, is one thing, and the spirit and temper in which it is worked is another. Sometimes the master is a Shylock, whose ruling question is: "Is it nominated in the bond?" Another will show leniency without weakness, and be kind towards worthy men who would, but cannot always fulfil engagements.

II. WHY DISPLAY CHRISTIAN FORBEARANCE? The succession of phrases in this context seems abrupt, yet there is a subtle and beautiful connection, and they supply the motives:—

1. Christians, you "rejoice in the Lord," and therefore you can afford to be lenient.

An invalid feels every change of temperature: a man of robust health can brave any weather. His inherent strength of constitution shakes off slight attacks with disdain. In Phil. i. 15-19, Paul is the object of deliberate annoyance: what then? Retaliation? Miles above it. "Christ is preached, and I therein do rejoice." Abraham and Lot disagree, see Gen. xiii. 9. Stand on his rights? The man who looked for a city said, "Take what you like, right or left." Men of the world have their portion in this life. Touch that, and who wonders that they resent it. Nothing else is left. But the man who knows his treasure in Christ is able on occasion to be magnanimous.

2. "The Lord is at hand," therefore you *may well* afford to be lenient.

Voices speak to you from opposite directions. Are you attacked, wronged in any way; restrain your anger. Vengeance is mine, &c. The Lord is at hand—much nearer than most men think. Much of the judicial is proceeding now. The man who has Christ for his advocate and avenger, may well be humane towards his adversaries. Job, when wronged—"my witness is in heaven." Paul, Alexander the copper-smith—"the Lord reward him".

3. The Lord is very merciful to you. You *ought* to be lenient.

When we find ourselves standing on our rights, driving hard bargains, dealing out unmitigated censures, might it not shame us to remember—What if God dealt so with me? The throne of grace would be changed to the throne of judgment. He hath *not* dealt with us after our sins. *Forgiveness* is a word inscribed on the portals of the Christian temple in letters of light.

Hear the old voice, "Learn of Me, who am meek and lowly of heart." Make your moderation (so explained) known to all men—Paul was anxious for the reputation of Christianity in the world. In the Church on earth let all men see some fair reflection of the great charity of heaven.

Brixton Hill.

D. JONES, B.A.

Aspects of Human Perfection.

"NOT AS THOUGH I HAD ALREADY ATTAINED, EITHER WERE ALREADY PERFECT: BUT I FOLLOW AFTER, IF THAT I MAY APPREHEND THAT FOR WHICH ALSO I AM APPREHENDED OF CHRIST JESUS. . . . LET US THEREFORE, AS MANY AS BE PERFECT, BE THUS MINDED."—*Phil. iii. 12, 15.*



HE eagle, in his upward flight, aims at the sun. Though he falls so immeasurably short of his aim, there is that within him that seems to impel him to make that his goal. So the children of God make perfection of character their constant aim, and will never rest satisfied until they are "just men made perfect." But the holiest men who have trod the earth have left no record that they have realized their desire on this side of death. Certainly Paul had not when he wrote these words. They suggest,—

I. A PERFECTION ATTAINED BY MANY. "As many as be perfect."

The word perfect here refers to the laws of the game or course; it is also a military term, signifying those who are thoroughly drilled and able to move in harmony with each other by a perfect knowledge of what they have to do, subjecting themselves to one master-mind. So some of the Philippians knew the laws of the kingdom of Christ. They knew that the "true circumcision," the essence of Christian life, was to "worship God in the Spirit," to "rejoice in Christ Jesus," and to "have no confidence in the flesh" (verse 3). Their perfection consisted in this thorough acquaintance with the essentials of heart religion, leading to submission to their Master's mind, who, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God," etc. (*Phil. ii. 8*).

II. THE PERFECTION ATTAINED BY NONE. "Not as though," etc.

Paul had not obtained the perfection of absolute sinlessness. He had everything to make him grow. He had seen the "Just One," had received a special inspiration of the Holy Ghost, seen visions, and been in the third heaven. Yet at this time he was not perfect—had not "attained."

Nevertheless, as the child contains the man, and the acorn the oak, the germ of the absolutely perfect being was within

him, even as it is in every soul who is vitally united to Christ.

III. THE SEEKING TO OBTAIN *absolute* PERFECTION, IS A PROOF THAT WE POSSESS THE *relative*.

"This one thing I do." The artist who puts on canvas the landscape or the human face, strives to make his copy an exact counterpart of the original. Although he never realizes his ideal, he keeps up his relative perfection by continually striving after the absolute. So with the Christian.

Therefore let no Christian despair because he does not attain in this world the perfect character he desires. As the incoming of the light reveals the dust, so the most perfect see most plainly their imperfections.

But the Apostle's words imply that perfection will be attained. "Not as though I had already," etc. The desire is a prophecy that the fulfilment will be realized. Therefore, "add to your faith," etc. (2 Pet. i. 5). W. HARRIS.

St. Paul's Estimate of Life and Death.

"FOR ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST, AND TO DIE IS GAIN."—*Phil. i. 21*.

WHEN the Apostle wrote these words, he was passing through one of the *testing times* of life, times when what is in us comes out, and the man's real character and disposition show themselves. He was a prisoner in the power of the Emperor Nero, who inflicted pain upon others, not only without compunction, but to give himself pleasure. Fancy the Apostle's *outlook*, and how a selfish, cowardly man would have felt under such circumstances. And yet see what is said in the text, and also in the verses which go before and which follow after.

1. The figures in the text are bold ones; but they are entirely in harmony with the style of the writer, and at once betray their authorship. When writing to the Galatians, he had spoken of Christ "living in him." He wrote to Timothy of "Christ who is our Hope." And in his Epistle to the Colossians, he speaks of "Christ who is our Life." Hence

we are not surprised by his telling the Corinthians that the crucified Christ was the great theme upon which he determined to discourse, when he first came among them. It was to these same people, too, that he defended the spirit of his ministry by the fact that the "love of Christ constrained" him, that love "which passeth knowledge." Paul used strong words when he said, "For me to live is Christ." But consider what Christ was to Paul. Christ was to him the Image of the Father and the Ideal of humanity, besides being the Being in Whom were centred all the essential truths and facts of Christianity. Hence Christ was the Subject of his preaching (2 Cor. iv. 5), his Support in trial (2 Cor. xii. 9), and the One great Being to whom his own labours and the labours of others were to be subservient (Phil. i. 18).

2. If to live be Christ, then a Christian's life is not one of mere form, or correct belief, or sensuous excitement; but entire devotion to the one Master.

3. When the Apostle said that to him death would be "gain," he was not expressing a selfish feeling, but a simple Christian fact. Granted that the life is a Christlike one, what else can the death be but a gainful one? The death of such a man as Paul would be a loss to the world, and to the Christian Churches he had planted or watered. But, so far as he himself was concerned, it would be gain, in sensible loss of evils, greater development of power, more perfect knowledge, more perfect society, and in the seal which death would set upon his life-work. It may here be noted that the Apostle's idea of death being to him a personal gain, is inconsistent with the dreadful idea of the sleep of the soul. How could he, whose spirit was so active and self-sacrificing, count it a gain to die, if to die were to be inactive, and to be in a state which allowed of no good being done to others? Surely work, even with pain and sorrow, would have been preferred by such a man to inactivity and unconsciousness!

4. We have seen what was "St. Paul's estimate of Life and Death." But all have one, in heart, if not in head or word. Now St. Paul's form of life is not ours. But the spirit of his

life may, and ought to be ours. What is life to us? That question, rightly answered, would determine the other question, of what death would be to us. It is said, and rightly too, that it is a solemn thing to die; but it is a far more solemn thing to live, because the results of death will take their character, absolutely and exclusively, from the life we have led. It was because Paul could say, "For me to live is Christ," that he could add, "and to die is gain."

5. *Christ-like living!* This is what the world and the Church (for the world's sake) need. To receive Christ's truth, to live Christ's life, to be filled with Christ's Spirit, to have Christ within us as a sort of second self: oh, what a career of usefulness and blessedness would society then enter upon, were its members thus to live! Society has tried, and in many cases "found wanting," the Christianity of sects and *isms*: let it try the Christianity of Christ, and it shall have "the witness within" itself that *that* Christianity is a living truth and a power of right over wrong, of goodness over evil.

F. R. YOUNG.

The Fatherhood of God.—3. His Relation to the Bereaved.

"A FATHER OF THE FATHERLESS, AND A JUDGE OF THE WIDOWS, IS GOD IN HIS HOLY HABITATION."—*Ps. lxxviii. 5.*



HE first thought that rushes to the mind of the bereaved, when the loved spirit has fled and all medical skill is for ever unavailing, all tender ministration unneeded and unappreciated, is often a painful one—*God is the Bereaver*. Had He pleased, the life might have been spared. Such was the thought that successively in Martha and Mary broke out into the articulate cry, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died;" and He might have been there, or might have sent His healing power athwart the intervening distance, as He did in the case of the nobleman's son, the centurion's servant, and the daughter of the Syro-phenician woman. But the very fact that God is the Bereaver should serve to mitigate the severity of the stroke.

If He is recognised as the Father of our spirits and the Father of the faithful, the assurance that the painful event is of His permission should be followed by the conviction that it is fraught with blessing hereafter to be unfolded. Some will bitterly exclaim, "The loved one is gone, it does not much matter who the bereaver is." But it does matter greatly. A child has a cherished possession; does it make no difference to him whether it be snatched away abruptly by some rough stranger, or whether it be taken quietly, firmly, and put up out of his reach and sight by the parent, whose love and wisdom have been proved in a hundred ways? In the former case he deems his possession irrecoverably gone—stolen, in the latter, though the parental action be not explained, he will be likely to think of his treasure as taken away for some sufficient reason, to be restored another day.

Thus, whilst the ungodly suffer terribly in bereavement, feeling that their treasure is stolen—snatched from them by the remorseless 'robber, Death, the children of God, refusing to doubt their Father's wisdom and love, which have been proven so often and in so many ways, believe that His meaning is kind, that the issue will be gracious, and that one day the possession will be restored.

But, if we attribute the removal to God, we must also ascribe to Him the original gift. If He is the Bereaver, He was also *the Bestower*. In proportion as the loss is keen, the missing possession must have been a boon and delight for which heartfelt thanksgiving should be ascribed to God. The godly man will not say repiningly, "Why was my treasure taken away, and so soon?" but, "What kindness, that I ever had the gift, and that it was continued to me so long! 'Better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all.'" Nay, he will erase the word "lost," and say, "Better, infinitely better, to have loved and parted, with the prospect of eternal reunion, than never to have loved at all."

Recognising God in all, the Christian will regard Him as Bestower and Bereaver; and, rejoicing in a fuller and later revelation of the Divine nature and purpose than the poet

Patriarch possessed, will echo the words of Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." By rendering such thoughts possible, God makes Himself the Father of the bereaved.

I. God shows His Fatherhood to the bereaved by *extending toward them a special providence*. He were indeed a guilty parent who neglected to make such provision for his offspring as lay within his power; he were indeed a faithless parent who,—called prematurely, as men would say, from earth,—could not, grasping the manifold promises of Scripture, commit his children confidently to Him who has described Himself as "a Father of the fatherless." Not a few are the instances around us of those who, early made orphans, have in a very marked manner been adopted of God, Who has raised up friends for them, directed their steps, and ultimately placed them in positions of usefulness and honour.

That this providence includes *protection*, we infer, as God declares Himself "a judge of the widows," words that include not only comfort to the bereaved but warning to such as would take advantage of their helpless position.

It has often happened, that she on whom the stroke of widowhood falls stands for the first time without an elder, stronger arm on which to lean. In childhood and girlhood the parents comforted and guarded. Leaving their roof, smiling through her tears, hope and trust overmastering timidity, she enters on the joys and duties of the new home, amidst which the tidings of a father's and a mother's death come with a lessened severity as she relies more wholly on him with whom her lot is linked. When this prop fails, what can she do? When she, who but arranged the home, has, it may be, to support it, what desolation must fall on her spirit, if she fail to recognise God's relation to the bereaved. But realizing the special tenderness He cherishes for the forlorn, and trusting the special providence accorded to the helpless, her way may be heroic as it was once happy.

II. God shows His Fatherhood to the bereaved by *exerting upon them a special spiritual influence*. The orphan child of

Christian parents is perhaps less to be pitied on account of the withdrawal of the providing hand, than the removal of the watchful and loving heart, which seemed to guarantee that the little one should grow up to realize and rejoice in redemption. But is the parent's influence wholly gone, save as it lingers in the memory? Are not the "spirits of the just made perfect" with Christ? Possessed of intelligence and memory, do they not more earnestly than ever desire the welfare of those they love? Will He who heard their prayers on earth disregard their desires in heaven? Certainly some of us feel assured that our parents have been even more instrumental of spiritual blessing to us since they entered the "Father's House," than when they tarried with us here.

In another way, at times, the removal of the parent has resulted in spiritual good to the child. It has happened that the presence of the former has, all unintentionally, been less a mirror reflecting God than a screen hiding Him. The child, wholly content with the providence and love of the human, has not cast himself on the care and kindness of the Divine; but the need of this is felt in bereavement, and the loss of the earthly parent reveals the heavenly. But apart from these considerations, such Scripture as our text gives us much reason to believe that special spiritual influences of a gracious kind are brought to bear on those hearts that are painfully bereaved in the providence of God, so that there is the more probability of new life being possessed by the unregenerate and higher excellence attained by the faithful.

The latter portion of the text seems to condition, if not to localize, the manifestation of special regard toward the bereaved. "A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in *His holy habitation*." Some think that the psalm was composed on the occasion of the removing of the ark by David from the house of Obed-edom to Zion, and that reference is here made to the tabernacle which he erected on that mount. If so, then we seem to be taught that, as it was in the sanctuary that Asaph found light and consolation amidst the distressing anomalies of life, so in God's holy

habitation, whilst devoutly engaged in the exercises of worship, those truths are most forcibly conveyed to the heart which are capable of giving comfort to the fatherless and courage to the widows. But others suppose the expression "holy habitation," to refer to God's invisible dwelling-place, even as mention has just been made of His visible glory; and they think the idea intended to be conveyed is, that God is tender and gracious in His essential character. We may observe a man's career to be illustrious, but if we want to know him we ask what he is in his home; so, when we are told what God is in His "holy habitation," we are informed as to His real disposition.

But this language, if it is not meant to convey, suggests another thought. God's "holy habitation," the "Father's house," is spoken of by Christ as the abode of the departed, and we are reminded of *how they fare yonder*. We call the children who are left on earth, orphans. Are not those who are taken from the home equally deprived of parental care? We speak of the bereaved husband as a widower. Is not the departed wife to be deemed a widow? And, returning from the grave covering the lifeless form of child or wife, as long as we look down we pity and deem them desolate, beyond the reach of solace and aid; so soon as we look up, we are comforted, and say, "A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in His holy habitation." He cares for them yonder better than we could do.

See, finally, how Christ,—God manifest in the flesh,—interpreted this beautiful expression of Divine considerateness. How fond was He of the children, how kind to the widow, what sympathetic grief is His by the grave of Lazarus! We cease to be surprised when He says, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," or, when, identifying Himself with the Holy Spirit, He says, "I will not leave you comfortless [orphans], I will come to you."

Southampton.

SEPTIMUS MARCH, B.A.

The Hope of Perfection.

"FOR THIS CORRUPTIBLE MUST PUT ON INCORRUPTION."—1 Cor. xv. 53.

QUR hope, though based upon the Gospel, is consistent with a perfectly rational philosophy, as all life is progressive and an orderly movement from the lower to the higher. The progress of life is a process of individualization; the higher the organization, the more perfect the individual. At a certain level in creation the individual becomes conscious, and able to act voluntarily. Man is the most highly organized creature, and therefore endowed with the largest measure of consciousness. Thus science shows us an order in existence, the ascending scale of which is a more perfect individualization and a fuller consciousness. At present science stops at man as he is. Can we stop here? Certainly not.

Because man is not perfect, and he is capable of infinite improvement, so we hope for deliverance. It may be said, there are two solutions to the problem suggested, besides individual immortality and perfection. One is, the existence of a higher order of beings—an order above man, as man is above the quadruped; the other, the purpose of a development of a higher race out of the present one. And if we disallow the immortal progress of the individual, we must admit one or other of these hypotheses, for we cannot believe that God is working through the order of creation to produce perfect creatures and only then ceases when a being is produced who is all but perfect, who is on the verge of the heavenly, which he will never in any fashion attain to. So that those who believe that man, as he at present is, is the very best that creation can or will produce, hold a position which is untenable and unphilosophic. But both these positions,—that there are higher orders than man, and that the human race is destined to become more perfect than it is now,—are quite consistent with a belief in the immortality and perfection of the individual.

I. The moral improvement of the individual is FOLLOWED BY A FINER ORGANIZATION AND SENSIBILITY. A man by impurity

and selfishness corrupts and brutalizes his nature, and becomes insensible to all that is finest and most beautiful. The pure and gentle man, on the contrary, becomes more sensitive; he sees wonderful skill and beauty in the most minute works of God. When he stands ankle deep in the dewy meadows on a summer morning, each dewdrop and each blade of grass is to him a thing of life and order, in which a Power is manifested past his finding out, but whose doings he can trace in every line and fibre; he steps aside lest he should trample down a flower, because to him it is a living form of perfect beauty, which, if he destroyed, he could not renew. But the lower man, grovelling in his selfishness and sin, sees nothing but what may contribute in some way to his own gratification; and he would without remorse destroy the beauty of half a county, if it would increase the hoard in his money bags. But the sensitive man does not pour out his sympathy upon inanimate nature alone; he pities the sufferings of the brute creation and rejoices in contributing to their comfort and pleasure; though mostly amongst his own race does he take delight in helping the weak, instructing the ignorant, feeding the hungry, and comforting the sorrowful. He shares too the gladness of all innocent joy, and would shrink from marring the delight of the tiniest child.

II. The moral improvement of man is THE BASIS OF EXTENDED KNOWLEDGE. It begets a more perfect consciousness. Sensibility clears a man's vision, and brings him nearer to, while it separates him consciously more distinctly from, the rest of the universe. Necessarily, then, a higher life,—that is, a more perfect individuality and more intense consciousness,—will bring a wider knowledge. We shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. What are now mysteries will unfold themselves to the penetrating vision of our perfected spirits. This view of the subject guarantees our future personal consciousness. The raising of life is identical with an intensified personality. So that absorption into the impersonal and universal would not be a higher life, but a returning to that from which we have emerged. It might not be absolute

death; but it would not be a higher life, for it would be formless, while the progress of life is the perfecting of form.

III. The moral improvement of a man PRODUCES ACUTER SYMPATHY AND MORE INTIMATE FELLOWSHIP. The man of sensibility has a higher sympathy with his race than any other. He knows what is in man. He reads to some extent all hearts. The poet knows all our secrets, and we see our most hidden thoughts exposed in his pages. The sensitive man enters into the spirit of all good men; he understands them, values them rightly, and vindicates them if they are misunderstood and falsely accused. *Fellowship*.—In his personal relationship his sensibility is exhibited most perfectly. If he has for companions others like himself, as he must have or be alone, how perfect is the understanding between them; how they share each other's joy and each other's sorrow, and grow almost into one in the communion of knowledge and hope and love. So that the question of recognition and fellowship in heaven is one of the most idle. We are sure to meet those whom we love; and our knowledge of them must be more intimate than it is now, because a more perfect life implies a more perfect consciousness and a finer sensibility.

"Will it evermore be thus,
Spirit still impervious?
Shall we never fairly stand
Soul to soul as hand to hand?"

Undoubtedly we shall; because the finer organization which we shall acquire, the incorruptible which this corruptible will put on, will make us capable of meeting those we love in a nearer embrace than ever mortals knew. Nearer than hand to hand, it will be "soul to soul"; spirit will beat with spirit in one blissful vibration, and we shall see each other face to face. But one step higher: "the pure in heart shall see God." The spirit, clouded by no fleshly veil, will be conscious of His presence, and eternally and vividly satisfied with His love.

IV. MAN'S CAPABILITY OF IMPROVEMENT GIVES US HOPE FOR ALL. As we have admitted that indulgence in sin renders the man

organically corrupt, it may be urged, that if the pursuit of holiness tends to a higher personality,—that is, to more life,—does it not follow that sin tends by its growing corruption to lead a being from worse to worse until he reaches a point where he becomes extinct. Of course we presume, upon other grounds, that the individual in every man is so far advanced that extinction is out of the question—that, according to our old-fashioned doctrines, the spirit of man is deathless—that the immortal spark cannot be put out. At any rate, resting our argument upon the unity of the race, if *any* are immortal, all are. What then? The wicked cannot go on corrupting eternally; in the nature of things that is impossible. They must descend until they become extinct, or until they reach a point where reaction sets in; that is, where they will come under the regenerating influence of the love of Christ. And it is for this we hope, *that all life is struggling upward in spite of its many failures*; that evil is not an ever-descending plane, but a curve; that below the deepest depth of sin there is a deeper depth of mercy; that beyond all death there is life; that encircling all existence there is Love.

WALTER LLOYD.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

Prayer: A Spiritual Current that may be "Hindered."

"THAT YOUR PRAYERS BE NOT HINDERED."—1 Pet. iii. 7.

PETER utters these words as an argument for purity, fidelity, and affection in matrimonial life. He meant to say, that anything unvirtuous, unloving, unpeaceful in this relationship would tend to the *hindering* of prayer. His language suggests three things.

I. That PRAYER IS A HABIT OF LIFE. The words do not suggest to you prayer as a service, a profitable practice, an invocation for favours, but rather as an *habitual* course of life, which may be obstructed. The conventional idea of prayer is foreign to the Christian idea. An old Puritan author has given more of the Scriptural idea of prayer than is promulgated in modern religious teaching.

"It is not" says he, "the arithmetic of prayer, how many they are; it is not the geometry of prayer, how long they are; it is not the rhetoric of prayer, how eloquent they may be; it is not the music of prayer, how sweetly they may sound; it is not the logic of prayer, upon what considerations of force they may be based; it is not the method of prayer, in the scientific arrangement of its different parts; it is not the diversity of prayer, in the many objects which are to be presented before God, that is here more expressly meant by the Apostle. It is that spirit of prayer which is the spirit of true Christian trust and consolation. For prayer is simply bringing one's pitcher to the fountain and supplying its emptiness; is the whisper about others in an ear that is never dull to hear, and the repose of faintness upon a bosom and arm that always are strong with faithful love." The essence of prayer, in fact, is this—*an abiding consciousness of absolute dependence on God*. This consciousness keeps the soul ever in connection with Him and turns the material universe into a mirror, reflecting everywhere the invisible, an organ speaking out everywhere the eternal. This is prayer, and in this we are commanded to be constant. "Pray without ceasing."

It is suggested,—

II. That THIS HABIT OF LIFE MAY BE OBSTRUCTED. "That your prayers be not hindered." The current may be arrested, the life may be checked. How can it be obstructed? By living in an impure moral atmosphere. The man who goes into foul air gets hindered in his breathing and interrupted in the circulation of his life's blood. So the man who gets into the atmosphere of worldliness, fashion, sensual indulgences and vain amusements, will find that his current of devotion is arrested.

Again: The man who takes into his system unwholesome food, will experience a check in the flow of his vitality; and so with the man who neglects food altogether. So in relation to the spiritual life. The man who takes in to him the mere trash of human genius, and not the word of God which is the breath of life, will soon experience, not only the weakening, but the quenching of spiritual vitality. As a physician will advise his patient to avoid such food, that his circulation may not be embarrassed, remove from that climate that his breathing may not be impeded, adopt that exercise and temperance that all the vital functions may be kept in healthful play, so Peter recommends a certain moral course of

conduct, that their "prayers be not hindered."

III. THAT THIS OBSTRUCTION IS A CALAMITY TO BE DREADED. "That your prayers be not hindered," which is as if Peter had said, will be a "terrible calamity." If your prayer is "hindered," then your intercourse with the spiritual world is interrupted and you get enshrouded, encased in materialism. "We may imagine" says a modern author, "an exile in a land far off, separated by wide oceans from his home, his birthright, and his relatives. If he by negligence or by mishap forego or long suspend all intercourse and correspondence with his distant friends, he will lose by degrees his fellow-feeling, his affinities, his sense of relationship with them; and even if he were by some unexpected chance suddenly restored to them, he might find himself a stranger amongst strangers, ignorant of their laws, their ways, their customs, perhaps alienated from their sympathies, with no community of taste, impatient of their company, hankering after more congenial associates. Therefore it is that absence is ever prone to compensate and repair its losses by correspondence, mutual presents, affectionate messages, flattering reminiscences, and fond memorials; and every occurrence of such

intercourse re-enlivens the attachment of the exile towards the home which he is expecting to regain." Oh, if our prayers be "hindered," if our conscious dependence upon God be interrupted, we get disconnected even from God Himself. It is only as the soul realises God that it gets life, and power, and growth, and happiness. It is only as the earth turns its face to the sun that it gets quickened into life and adorned with beauty; and it is only as the soul is brought into conscious contact with God that it lives and grows and flourishes.

Soul Liberty.

"WHERE THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS, THERE IS LIBERTY."—2 Cor. iii. 17.

By the spirit of the Lord, we mean the spirit of Christ; and by the spirit of Christ, is meant His moral temper. If any man have not this "spirit of Christ," this disposition, he is none of His. Now, what is meant is, that the man who has this disposition of Christ enjoys true liberty.

I. He is FREE FROM THE BONDAGE OF CEREMONIALISM. The more destitute a Church is of the spirit of religion, the more active it is in building up a system of Ritualism, and this Ritualism becomes the prison of souls. The soul

living in formulæ and rites, is a captive. Judaism became a great soul prison; and conventional Christianity is a dungeon also, only with a little more light and space. Now, the man who gets inspired with the disposition of Christ, breaks away from the bondage of all religious verbalities, theories, and ceremonies, and revels in the regions of infinite love.

II. He is free from the TRAMMELS OF LEGALITY. The man who is controlled in his actions by prescriptive rule has the fetters on him. He who does a thing simply because he is commanded to do it, moves, not as a free man, but a slave. He is a machine, not an agent. Now, the man who has the "spirit of Christ," the disposition of Christ within him, is above law; Sinai lies like a smoking mole-hill at his feet. The right thing is done, not because it is commanded, but because it is admired, and because the Legislator is supremely loved. The authority which governs the soul, is not legislative but moral. The ruler is not regarded as a taskmaster or judge, but as a friend devoutly loved. "Ye are no longer servants," said Christ to His disciples, "Ye are my friends."

III. He is free from SUPERSTITIOUS FEARS. Fear is bondage; and some, through "fear of death," are all their

lifetime "subject to bondage." Dread of trials is bondage, dread of death is bondage, dread of hell is bondage. What millions are held by crafty priests in the dungeon of superstitious fears! The man who has the "spirit of Christ" within him, is free from such bondage. "Perfect love casteth out fear." Crafty priests, with their ecclesiastical menaces, and vulgar preachers, with their horrid descriptions of future punishment and their heartless denunciations, may bring the base in spirit crouching in terror to their feet; but the Christ-loving man rises as superior to all as the orbs of heaven to the rolling thunders of this earth. The spirit of Christianity is not fear, but love, power, and a sound mind.

CONCLUSION: Who will not seek this spirit? This spirit is at once the guarantee and the inspiration of that liberty which no despot can touch, no time destroy—the "glorious liberty of the children of God."

Life as it is, and Life as it might become.

"AND THE MEN OF THE CITY SAID UNTO ELISHA, BEHOLD, I PRAY THEE, THE SITUATION OF THIS CITY IS PLEASANT, AS MY LORD SEETH: BUT THE WATER IS NAUGHT, AND THE GROUND BARREN. AND HE SAID, BRING ME A NEW CRUSE, AND PUT SALT THEREIN. AND THEY BROUGHT IT TO HIM. AND HE WENT FORTH

UNTO THE SPRING OF THE WATERS, AND CAST THE SALT IN THERE, AND SAID, THUS SAITH THE LORD, I HAVE HEALED THESE WATERS; THERE SHALL NOT BE FROM THENCE ANY MORE DEATH OR BARREN LAND. SO THE WATERS WERE HEALED UNTO THIS DAY, ACCORDING TO THE SAYING OF ELISHA WHICH HE SPAKE.—2 Kings ii. 19-22.

THIS chapter presents to us two of the most remarkable men that ever appeared on the stage of human life, the brightest stars in the firmament of the race—Elijah and Elisha. The former is borne to heaven by a whirlwind, and on the latter his mantle falls. When one great man departs, Heaven prepares another to step into his place and to carry on the work. Joshua succeeded Moses, Solomon David, Jeremiah Isaiah, and Elisha succeeds Elijah. The recognition of Elisha's prophetic office by the sons of the prophets was obtained by two circumstances—his miraculous passage across the Jordan, and the great miracle he performed in Jericho. This is the circumstance referred to in the passage—he heals the bitter water by casting salt into it. This deed of supernatural power convinced the sons of the prophets that Elisha stood among them, fully equipped with the spirit that dwelt in Elijah.

These verses suggest to us the two great elements in life, the *pleasant* and the *painful*;

and they are presented here as associated and as separated.

Here we have a picture of—

I. LIFE AS IT IS. That is, with the pleasant and the painful *associated*. The men of Jericho told the prophet that the "city" was "pleasant." There was much in the old masonry to interest them, and much in the scenery around to command their admiration. But in connection with the pleasant there was the disagreeable. "The water is naught, and the ground barren." Now, this is a picture of every man's life.

First: It is so *materially*. How much we have in this material world that is pleasant to our senses and healthful and strengthening to our bodies; but amidst all there is the painful. There are malarial swamps, pestilential winds, roaring earthquakes, and poisonous minerals and plants, etc., etc.

Secondly: It is so *intellectually*. There is much in the region of intellect that is pleasant—bubbling springs of thought, tempting regions of inquiry, bright visions and hypotheses bespangling the heavens. But with all this there is much that is painful—dense clouds of ignorance hanging over the scene, hideous doubts howling in the ear, terrific chasms yawning at the feet.

Thirdly: It is so *socially*. How much in social life is pleasant—the friendly grasps, the beaming countenances, the affectionate greetings, the sweet amenities of those with whom we meet and mingle. How pleasant! The flow and re-flow of social love is a delectable enjoyment; but with all this there is much that is painful—social unchastities, hypocrisies, frauds, insolences, sycophancies, are most distracting and distressing.

Fourthly: It is so *religiously*. In that sphere of spirit life which embraces all other spheres, and gives an eternal significance to all else, viz. the religious, where the idea of God fills the horizon, there is the infinitely pleasant. When the soul loves the Supremely Good supremely, and looks at the universe through Him, then it is in Paradise. But in this wonderful region how much of the painful do we experience, what temptation to doubt, what infidelity and blasphemy often assail us, and bring over us the horror of a “great darkness.”

Here we have a picture of—

II. LIFE AS IT MIGHT BECOME. The painful and the pleasant separated. Elisha here separates the painful from the pleasant. Two remarks here.

First: The separation was a *happy* one. He did not take away the pleasant

from the painful, but the painful from the pleasant. All that was pleasant in the city remained; all that was painful and pernicious in the waters he removed. In the case of all there will come a separation of the painful from the pleasant. In some cases the separation will be anything but happy; all the pleasant will be removed, and nothing but the miserable left. It is the interest and the duty of every man to seek such a separation as shall secure for him the pleasant and the pleasant only.

Secondly: The separation was a *supernatural* one. “And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land. So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.” No sooner, it would seem, did he cast the salt into the reservoir, than the diseased impurities were removed, and the waters became fresh, wholesome, and sparkling.

The GOSPEL is the true “cruse” for separating the painful from the pleasant in the experience of human life. It is the “salt” that will make all

the streams of human thought and feeling clear as crystal and refreshing as the draughts of Paradise.

CONCLUSION: Thank God for the pleasant in your life. Seek earnestly that Gospel cruse whose salt alone can rid your life of all that is deleterious and distressing.

Balancings in Life.

"I AM THIS DAY WEAK, THOUGH ANOINTED KING."—2 Sam. iii. 39.

A STORMY period of David's life was just ending. Saul and Jonathan were both dead. There appeared to be nothing to hinder David's quiet accession to the throne. Abner, a powerful general, presented the only difficulty, in that he had espoused the cause of Ishbosheth, the supposed legitimate heir to the throne. Probably Abner would have been on the side of David but for a strong jealousy existing between himself and David's leading general. Joab hated Abner because he had slain a brother of his. He sought opportunity to be revenged.

As Abner was but lightly attached to the cause of Ishbosheth he was easily led by some foolish words of the one he had defended to forsake his service and enter that of David. He went and offered to win over the as-yet-disaffected tribes to him. David was glad. He sent Abner away in peace and great

favour. Joab came into the city, and found out what had been done. He was angry, sent for Abner, met him in the gate at Hebron, and smote him under the fifth rib. David was intensely pained when he heard of this circumstance, not only because of the disadvantage wrought towards himself, but because he very much esteemed Abner. Mutual respect had been the outcome of mutual resistance. He followed Abner to the grave, and made over him a funeral oration. To his servants he uttered in bitterness the words of the text. "I am weak this day, though anointed king." Had Abner lived, he would have had some one to balance the overweening influence of Joab and his family; but as he is dead, David utters the words which hint at something concerning the *balancings in life*.

I. Some disappointment is sure to follow upon the attainment of our hopes and to intermingle with our joys.

Men struggle for riches all life long, and when they have gained them, oft have no power of enjoyment left. The argosy of food is just coming into port, but somehow is caught by the tide, driven behind the pier, and wrecked on the rugged rocks outside. The topmost step of the throne is reached, the sceptre grasped, the crown placed on the head, when the thorn is

felt pressing into the tender brow and the pæan of joy is toned by the minor note of sorrow.

This is not the *invariable* experience, but *general*. One might say that the exceptions establish the rule.

II. *These balancings in life are intended by the Author of all Life.* God has not promised that ease shall always follow on effort, nor full peace come immediately a victory is won.

It is of the Divine appointment, that those who have wealth, powers, or high position shall often have also strong jealousies, bitter annoyances, severe domestic troubles, great losses, unfulfilled expectations, and harsh regrets over unrealized ideas. The lady who sits in silks and lolls in luxury in her carriage, may have the anguish of unrequited affection, of having wasted life's richest jewel, love, on a heart as worthless as withered leaves and dry as summer's dust.

That man of genteel manners and calm exterior has a very Vesuvius in his breast. You see not the throes that disturb his soul.

So poverty and weakness, sickness and solitude, as well as strength and riches, have their balancings. Power can grow out of privation, and strength out of suffering, while *ennui* may be the offspring of pleasurable ease and

satiety of constant satisfaction. All happiness has its alloy and all sorrow its surcease. This is by Divine arrangement.

These thoughts should teach us,—(1) To find all our joy and strength in God. (2) To be thankful for any balancings that may develop being and life. (3) To see to it that we so live that no painful counterbalancing may follow upon this life in the future; to be careful lest the very greatness of the glory and richness of the reward should only make us feel how meagre was our earth-life and unpardonable our spiritual coldness. (4) That we should never let despondency seize us, remembering these balancings in life. (5) Many are weak and know it not. They are anointed heirs of God, kings and priests, but through sin they are weak every day. David knew what he had lost when Abner was taken; but many so live that they ignore the loss they suffer by their wilful ignorance of Christ, through whom alone any can be really strong and kingly in spirit.

FREDERICK HASTINGS.

Weston-super-Mare.

Notes on the Apostles' Creed.—1, "I believe."

"I BELIEVE."—*John xi. 27.*

THE "Apostles' Creed" is notable among all creeds and valuable above all others be-

cause it is scriptural, comprehensive, a statement of facts, and free from anathema. Probably it was not the Apostles' production, but it is apostolic in spirit and method. Like Martha's words, it is "a great confession of faith." And it illustrates for us such four great truths as the following:—

I. Christian Belief is a BELIEF IN FACTS. So Martha took refuge in her mourning and mystery in a great fact, that of Christ's work. Our holy religion rests not on theories, speculations, or even explanations, but on facts. Hence, for example, the Apostles preached "Christ and the Resurrection." The facts all centre in one Person, the Man Christ Jesus. So that Christ is Christianity; and we preach not, nor believe in any "*It*," however gorgeous, antique, profound, elaborate, and philosophical, but simply and sublimely "*in Him*."

II. Christian Belief is an INDIVIDUAL Belief in Facts. Jesus Christ teaches the right

use of the pronoun "*I*." He destroys all the limitations of selfishness, and yet invests it with dignity and solemnity. In belief "every man must bear his own burden." The censor and bigot may content himself with, "*they* believe;" the sentimentalist and ceremonialist with, "*we* believe;" the Christian feels, "*I* believe."

III. Christian Belief is an INTELLIGENT Belief in Facts. It is not a superstition. By true methods of induction, by right exercise of his moral as well as his merely intellectual nature he seeks to "*prove* all things." Then he can "*hold fast* what is good."

IV. Christian Belief is a PRACTICAL Belief in Facts. The philosopher rightly says, "Belief is essentially related to action," and again, "preparedness to act is the unmis- takable criterion of belief." It is so in commerce, science; travel, friendship. It is so in religion. Christian belief "shows" faith by "works."

URIAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

THE CONCLUSIVE PROOF.—There is one kind of evidence which is perpetually fresh, needing no knowledge of history, no critical apparatus, no philosophy. It is Christ's self-revelation contained in the four Gospels. Never mind how those Gospels came into your hands: never mind now what claim they have to inspiration. Read them, that will suffice. Read them as you might if an utterly unknown stranger had placed the volume in your hands, and left it without saying a word about it. You will find the portrait of One called Jesus Christ. Study that portrait, and say honestly whether it could possibly have been invented; and then further, say honestly whether it is possible that such a One could deceive or be deceived in any claim that He put forth; and read His words carefully, and answer the following question. Whom did He claim to be?

CANON NORRIS, of Bristol.

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts! and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths of the most vital interest and universal application.

Micah calls himself a Morasthite because he was a native of Morshethgath, a small town of Judea. He prophesied in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah, and his prophetic mission commenced soon after that of Isaiah. He was contemporary with him as well as with Hosea and Amos. His prophecies were directed to Samaria, the capital city of Israel, also to Jerusalem. Hence we find denunciations against Samaria mingled with prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem. One of his predictions, it seems, saved the life of Jeremiah, who would have been put to death for foretelling the destruction of the Temple, had not Micah foretold the same thing one hundred years before.

The book is commonly distributed into three sections: chaps. i. and ii., chaps. iii. to v., chaps. vi. and vii. Each of these opens with a summons to hear God's message, and then proceeds with expostulations and threatenings, which are succeeded by glorious promises.

His style is bold, fiery, and abrupt, and has not a little of the poetic grandeur of Isaiah. His sudden transitions from one subject to another often make his writings difficult to decipher.

MICAH.

No. CCXLII.

Man in the Moral Court of History.

"HEAR YE NOW WHAT THE LORD SAITH; ARISE, CONTEND THOU BEFORE THE MOUNTAINS, AND LET THE HILLS HEAR THY VOICE. HEAR YE, O MOUNTAINS, THE LORD'S CONTROVERSY, AND YE STRONG FOUNDATIONS OF THE EARTH: FOR THE LORD HATH A CONTROVERSY WITH HIS PEOPLE, AND HE WILL PLEAD WITH ISRAEL. O MY PEOPLE, WHAT HAVE I DONE UNTO THEE? AND WHEREIN HAVE I WEARIED THEE? TESTIFY AGAINST ME. FOR I BROUGHT THEE UP OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT, AND REDEEMED THEE OUT OF THE HOUSE OF SERVANTS; AND I SENT BEFORE THEE MOSES, AARON, AND MIRIAM. O MY PEOPLE, REMEMBER NOW WHAT BALAK KING OF MOAB CONSULTED, AND WHAT BALAAM THE SON OF

BEOR ANSWERED HIM FROM SHITTIM UNTO GILGAL; THAT YE MAY KNOW THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LORD."
—*Micah* vi. 1-5.

THERE are three things here very striking, and deserving our solemn attention.

I. Here is a call on man to GIVE AUDIENCE TO ALMIGHTY GOD. "Hear ye now what the Lord saith." These are the words of the prophet who speaks in the name of Jehovah, and on His behalf. Such an audience as this is,—

First: *Natural*. What is more natural than for the child to hang on the lips and attend to the words of his parent? How much more natural for the finite intelligence to open its ears to the words of the Infinite! It is more natural for

the human soul to look up listening to the great Father Spirit, and to receive communion from Him, than for the earth to thirst for the sunbeam and the shower. The human soul is made for it.

Such an audience as this is,—

Secondly: *Binding*. Of all duties, it is the most primary and imperative. The great command of God to all is, "Hearken diligently to me; hear, and your souls shall live." The conscience of every man tells him that his great duty is to hear God in all the operations of nature, in all the events of life, in all the teachings of the Bible, in all the monitions of the soul. God is always speaking to man. Would that the human ear was ever open to His voice!

Such an audience as this is,—

Thirdly: *Indispensable*. It is only as men hear, interpret, digest, appropriate, incarnate God's word, that they can rise to a true, noble, and happy life. "Hear ye now," then, "what the Lord saith," "Now." In the scenes of retribution whither you are hastening, you will be bound to hear His voice whether you will or no. There is another thing deserving our solemn attention,—

II. Here is a SUMMONS TO INANIMATE NATURE TO HEAR THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN GOD AND MAN. "Arise, contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice. Hear ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth: for the Lord hath a controversy with His people, and He will

plead with Israel." "It is not unusual," says an eminent Biblical scholar, "with the prophets to make appeals respecting the enormity of human guilt to the inanimate part of creation, as if it were impossible for it not to inspire them with life, and call them forth as intelligent witnesses of what had taken place in their presence. (See Deut. xxxii. 1; Isa. i. 2; Jer. ii. 12, 13.) By a similar personification the mountains and durable foundations of the earth are here summoned to appear in the court of heaven. Jehovah, however, instead of bringing forward the charge, abdicates, as it were, His right, and leaves it to the guilty party to state the case. In the appeal to lofty and ever-during mountains, in which the puny affairs of man could excite no prejudice, and which might therefore be regarded as quite impartial judges, there is something inexpressibly sublime." The appeal to inanimate nature,—

First: Indicates the *earnestness of the prophet*. He would seem to speak with such vehement earnestness as if he would wake the dead mountains and hills to hear his voice, and shake the very "foundations of the earth" with his thunders. He would cry aloud and spare not. Every minister should be earnest. "Passion is reason" here. The appeal to inanimate nature here,—

Secondly: Suggests the *stupidity of the people*. Perhaps the prophet meant to compare them to the dead hills and mountains. As firmly settled in sin were they as the mountains, as hard in heart as the rocks.

The appeal to inanimate nature,—

Thirdly: Hints the *universality of his theme*. His mission had no limitation; his doctrine was no secret, it was as open and free as nature. There is another thing deserving our solemn attention,—

III. Here is a CHALLENGE TO MAN TO FIND FAULT WITH DIVINE DEALINGS. "O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? Testify against me." His challenge,—

First: Implies that they could bring nothing against Him. "What have I done unto thee?" Which means, I have done nothing. I have not treated you with injustice, I have laid on you no burdens, I dare you to charge me with any act unrighteous or unkind. What fault has the sinner to find with God? His challenge,—

Secondly: Declares that He had done everything for them. He here reminds them of (1) His delivering them from Egyptian bondage. "I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants." He reminds them of (2) What He did for them on the way to Canaan. "I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam." Moses the lawgiver, Aaron the priest, and Miriam the prophetess. He reminds them of (3) What He did for them in Canaan. "O my people, remember now what Balak, king of Moab, consulted," etc. He not only furnished them with inspired teachers, but counteracted the designs of false ones, as in the case of Balaam, who

was engaged by Balak to curse them, but was inspired by Heaven to bless them. If the Israelites could find no fault with God, and if He did so much for them, how stand we here in this country and in this age under the full light of the Gospel dispensation? What more could He have done for us than He has? etc.

CONCLUSION. — Sinner, you are in the great moral court of the universe, you are arraigned before your Judge, you are commanded to listen to His voice. Inanimate nature around is a witness against you in this court; the very timbers of the wall will cry out against you. You are commanded to give a full explanation of your conduct. If you have any fault to find with the Almighty, bring it out. If you have not, ponder until your heart breaks into penitence and gratitude at the memory of His wonderful mercies to you.

No. CCXLIII.

Fellowship with God.

"WHEREWITH SHALL I COME BEFORE THE LORD, AND BOW MYSELF BEFORE THE HIGH GOD? SHALL I COME BEFORE HIM WITH BURNT OFFERINGS, WITH CALVES OF A YEAR OLD? WILL THE LORD BE PLEASED WITH THOUSANDS OF RAMS, OR WITH TEN THOUSANDS OF RIVERS OF OIL? SHALL I GIVE MY FIRSTBORN FOR MY TRANSGRESSION, THE FRUIT OF MY BODY FOR THE SIN OF MY SOUL? HE HATH SHOWED THEE, O MAN, WHAT IS GOOD; AND WHAT DOETH THE LORD REQUIRE OF THEE, BUT TO DO JUSTLY, AND TO LOVE MERCY, AND TO WALK HUMBLY WITH THY GOD?"—*Micah* vi. 6-8.

WE raise from these words three general observations,—

I. THAT A LOVING FELLOWSHIP WITH THE GREAT GOD IS THE ONE URGENT NEED OF HUMANITY. "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?" The language is that of a soul convinced of its sin, and roused to a sense of the importance of friendship with the Almighty. "Wherewith shall I come?" Come I must; I feel that distance from Him is my great sin and misery.

First: *Loving fellowship with the great God is essential to the happiness of moral intelligences.* Reason suggests this. All souls are the offspring of God; and where can children find happiness but in the friendship, the intercourse, and the presence of their loving Father? *Conscience* indicates this. Deep in the moral souls of all men is the yearning for intercourse with the Infinite. The hearts of all "cry out for the living God." The Bible teaches this. What mean such utterances as these: "Come now, let us reason together," "Return to the Lord," "Come unto Me," etc.? Not more impossible is it for a planet to shine when cut off from the sun, a river to flow when cut off from the fountain, a branch to grow when severed from the root, than for a soul to be happy apart from God. "In Thy presence is fulness of joy."

Secondly: *Man, in his unregenerate state, is estranged and far away from God.* He is represented as a lost sheep wandering in the wilderness away from the fold, as the prodigal son, remote from his father's house and in a far country. How far is the human soul, in its unregenerate state, from God? How far is

selfishness from benevolence, error from truth, pollution from holiness, wrong from right? The moral space or gulf is immeasurable.

Another remark which we raise from this passage is,—

II. THAT SACRIFICES THE MOST COSTLY ARE UTTERLY INSUFFICIENT TO SECURE THIS FELLOWSHIP. "Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?" Such offerings were presented under the law (Lev. i.). "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?" This also was enjoined in Leviticus. Oil was to be poured on the meat offering. "Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" The Jews offered many human sacrifices in the valley of Hinnom. They caused their children to pass through the fire in honour of Moloch. The idea is, Are there any sacrifices I can make, however costly and however painful, in order to commend me to the favour and friendship of Almighty God? The interrogatory implies a negative—No. Offer the cattle upon a thousand hills; can they be a satisfaction for sin? Can they commend you to Infinite Love? All are His. How men came at first to suppose that such sacrifices could be acceptable to God, is one of the greatest enigmas in human history. "Though a man give his body to be burned, without charity he is nothing." Two things are here presented,—

First: *The great cry of a sin-convinced soul is for God.* No sooner is conviction for sin struck into the human soul,

than it turns itself away at once from the world to God. I want God; I have lost Him; God I must have; oh that I knew where I might find Him! Secondly: *Worldly possessions, in the estimation of a sin-convicted soul, are comparatively worthless.* He is prepared to make any sacrifices. Holocausts, thousands of rams, ten thousands of rivers of oil, what are they? Nothing in comparison with the interests of the soul. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world," etc. It feels this when convicted of sin.

Another remark which we raise from this passage is,—

III. THAT MORAL EXCELLENCE IS THE ONE METHOD BY WHICH THIS FELLOWSHIP CAN BE OBTAINED. "He hath showed thee, Oman [Heb., "Adam," the whole race, Jew and Gentile alike], what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" This moral excellence consists of two parts, social and religious.

First: That which refers to man. (1) "Do justly." "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." "Render to all men their due." (2) "Love mercy." Mere justice is not enough, there must be tender commiseration for the suffering; the poor and the distressed must be remembered. Mercy must not only be shown, but loved. To help the needy must be delight.

Secondly: That which refers to God. "Walk humbly with thy God." Walking with God implies consciousness of the Divine Presence, harmony with

the Divine Will, progress in Divine excellence.

This is moral excellence—the moral excellence that God has revealed to all men, Jew and Gentile, the entire race, and that He requires from all; and that is the condition of fellowship with Him. How is this moral excellence to be attained? it may be asked. Philosophically, I know but of one way—faith in Him who is the revelation, the incarnation, the example of all moral excellence—Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION: Learn from this what religion is, how transcendent. It is the soul going away from sin and the world to God. Not merely to temples, theologies, ceremonies, but to God; and to Him, not through intellectual systems or ceremonial observances, but through a true life, both in relation to man and God.

No. CCXLIV.

God's Voice to Cities.

"THE LORD'S VOICE CRIETH UNTO THE CITY, AND THE MAN OF WISDOM SHALL SEE THY NAME: HEAR YE THE ROD, AND WHO HATH APPOINTED IT."
—Micah vi. 9.

WE raise three remarks from this verse,—

I. THAT GOD HAS A "VOICE" TO CITIES. "The Lord's voice crieth unto the city." The city meant here is Jerusalem. He speaks to a city (1) Through its commerce. The failures that follow fraud, indolence, chicanery. (2) Through its mortality. The funeral processions that darken the streets, the cemeteries that lie within and around. (3) Through its churches. The

sermons that are preached, the agents that are employed to enlighten the ignorant, to comfort the distressed, reclaim the lost. Heavenly wisdom "standeth at the corner of the streets, she crieth aloud," etc.

Another remark in the passage is,—

II. THE WISE IN CITIES RECOGNISE THE VOICE. "The man of wisdom shall see Thy name." "And wisdom has Thy name in its eye."—*Delitzsch*. "And he who is wise will regard Thy name."—*Henderson*. The idea seems to be this, that the wise man will recognise God's voice. Job says, "God speaks once, yea twice, and they perceive it not." The crowds that populate cities are deaf to the Divine "voice." The din of passion, the hum of commerce, the chimes of animal pleasures, drown the voice of God. But the wise man has his soul ever in a listening attitude. Like young Samuel, he says, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." Abraham heard the voice of God concerning Sodom, Daniel concerning Babylon, Jonah concerning Nineveh, Jeremiah concerning Jerusalem. "I will hear what the Lord God will say," this is the language of wise men.

We raise another remark from this passage,—

III. THE JUDGMENT OF CITIES

IS IN THAT VOICE. "Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it." The rod is the symbol of judgment. "O Assyria, the rod of my anger, the staff in my hand is my indignation."

First: *God warns cities*. (1) He warns them of ultimate temporal ruin. All cities must go—go with Nineveh, Greece, Babylon, Rome, Jerusalem. London, Paris, Petersburg, New York, etc., all must go as these have gone. It is only a question of time. (2) He warns them of spiritual danger. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." This is His voice to every citizen. Here is the "rod"—the warning—over all cities.

Secondly: *His warning should be attended to*. "Hear ye the rod." The only way to escape, is attention. Hear it and flee for refuge; hear it and thunder it abroad to alarm the careless; hear it before it is too late. "Oh that thou hadst attended to the things that belonged to thy peace in thy day: but now are they hid from thine eyes."

"Heaven gives the needful, but neglected, call.

What day, what hour, but knocks at human hearts,

To wake the soul to sense of future scenes?

Deaths stand, like Mercuries, in every way;

And kindly point us to our journey's end."—*Young*.

"Gold will make black white;
Wrong right: base noble: old young: coward valiant:
Pluck stout men's pillows from below their heads.
This yellow slave
Will knit and break religions: bless the accurst:
Make the hoar leprosy adored: place thieves
And give them title, knee, and approbation,
With senators on the bench."

Shakespeare.

The Preacher's Emblematory Helps.

ANCIENT MYTHS: THEIR MORAL MEANINGS.

Books of Reference: Max Müller's "Lectures on Comparative Mythology," Hardy's "Manual of Buddhism," Pritchard's "Analysis of Egyptian Mythology," Coxe's "Mythology of the Aryan Nations," Coxe's "Tales of Ancient Greece," Gladstone's "Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age," Farrar's "Critical History of Free Thought," Keary's "Heroes of Asgard," Canon Kingsley's "Sermons," Ruskin's "Queen of the Air," Sir T. Malory's "Morte d'Arthur," "Bacon's Essays," "Murray's Manual of Mythology."

"Shall we sneer and laugh at all these dreams as mere follies of the heathen? If we do so, we shall not show the spirit of God or the mind of Christ, nor shall we show our knowledge of the Bible."—*Canon Kingsley.*

No. VII.

Perseus: The Claims and Rewards of Piety.

THIS Greek hero was said to have been sent by the goddess Athene to the far East, to decapitate the Gorgon Medusa, a dire and life-destroying monster. Her face was that of a beautiful woman, but her brows were knit with everlasting pain, and her lips were thin and bitter like a snake's; instead of hair, vipers wreathed about her temples and shot out their forked tongues, while round her head were folded eagle's wings, and upon her bosom were claws of brass. Her eyes, whether living or dead, turned to stone all who gazed on her. Perseus, preparing to obey Athene and to bring back the head of this monster for her shield, is equipped by three of the gods for his heroic mission. Hermes gives his own winged sandals and his own resistless sword; Pluto gives his helmet—the hat of darkness, that renders its wearer invisible; and Athene herself gives her brightly burnished shield. Thus prepared, he goes valiantly and rapidly

forth. Pursuing the journey that Athene had mapped for him, he comes to a land nameless and unshapen. There he sees the three Graiai, or Grey Sisters, who had amongst them but one eye and one tooth. Of them he has to inquire the way, and compels their help by stealing their eye, which he only restores when they direct him rightly. Without further stop he flies swiftly away to Medusa, and finds her sleeping. Not daring to gaze on her directly, he watches her reflection in his burnished shield, that was given him as a mirror as well as a protection; and then, striking boldly one blow with the drawn sword, all is done. Her foul sisters spring yelling after him. Easily escaping on his swift sandals, on his journey he benevolently turns Atlas into stone, to deliver him from weariness. Then swept, as it seemed, far out of his course, he finds chained under a rock by the Mediterranean the matchlessly beautiful Andromeda, the daughter of the king and queen of Joppa, who had been devoted by them as a victim to the sea-gods. He frees her from her

dreadful doom, wins her love, and marries her. Canon Kingsley thus utters for Perseus what he may have felt in finding, unsought and unexpected, such a trophy.

"Ah, well spoke she, the wise one,
the grey-eyed Pallas Athene,
Known to immortals alone are
the prizes which lie for the
heroes,
Ready prepared at their feet; for
requiring a little, the rulers
Pay back the loan tenfold to the
man who, careless of pleasure,
Thirsting for honour and toils,
fares forth on a perilous
errand,
Led by the guiding of gods, and
strong in the strength of
immortals.
Thus have they led me to thee.
From afar unknowing I
marked thee,
Shining a snow-white cross on
the dark green walls of a
sea-cliff."

This fable seems naturally to illustrate certain great truths about the Claims and Rewards of Piety.

I. THE CLAIMS OF PIETY. All Perseus did and suffered was in devotion to what, in dream and subsequent directions, the goddess enjoined. Thus his mission was clearly the work of piety. And the story of it show us concerning the claims of Piety—(1) *They are often sternly difficult.* His journey, his conflict with the Gorgon, and afterwards with the sea monster, called out all the energy of an intrepid hero. So piety has to "resist unto blood, striving against sin;" has to "wrestle with principalities and powers;" has for its sometimes fascinating, yet actually horrible

enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil. Its claims (2) *Necessitate implicit obedience.* Perseus might not swerve a hair's breadth from the detailed and minute directions about sandals and sword, helmet and shield, inquiry, journey, and encounter. Nor may the pious man. "He that is faithful in the least, is faithful in the greatest." "Because thou hast been faithful over a few things I will make thee ruler over many." But the claims (3) *Are accompanied by Divine provisions of help.* The three gods furnished all that the Argive adventurer wanted in order to achieve his work, at least all that was not in himself. And Piety does not go on the warfare at its own charges. The source of our responsibility is also the source of our strength. He who says, "Go," says, "Lo I am with you alway." It is with us as with Perseus, in that First: We have Divine suggestion and Divine guidance. Second: We are Divinely equipped for special emergencies.

II. THE REWARDS OF PIETY. Whilst the highest and truest teaching shows us that in the doing of right itself there is true blessedness, we perhaps scarcely discover that in this story. But other and equally true teaching is illustrated here about the Rewards of Piety. (1) *They may be found in the success of the work.* For this far-travelled Greek to hold in his hand the ghastly head of the hated and hateful Gorgon, was surely recompense enough. And for piety to have won any victory, is unutterable reward. A child taught, a drunkard

reclaimed, a slave freed, a soul saved; these are triumphs that flush with sacred joy and fill with thanksgiving. But (2) *They may also be unsought and unexpected.* It was the lot of Perseus, not merely to slay Medusa, but to marry Andromeda. And so it often is in all true life. The seeker for truth finds far more than he sought; the toiler for others discovers blessedness to his own spirit, of which he never dreamed. Do the right, and the rewards will often come from sources whence you never looked for them, will be bright surprises of Divine revealing. Seeking an ideal wife, Perseus might have wandered the earth and tra-

versed the seas in vain. But doing his duty in the slaying of the Gorgon, he is rewarded with the unsung beauty and untold love of Andromeda. So our joys are constantly the flowers we find in the path of duty. Seek your life; you will lose it. Lose it for Christ's sake, and you shall find it. Selfishly resolve on attaining heaven as a destiny, and you will miss it. Be Christly on earth as a duty, and you will ensure the destiny of a present and a future heaven, such as eye has not seen, nor ear heard of, nor man's heart conceived.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

A Pure Heart.

A PURE heart is a heart where Divine love, like a celestial fire, flames on, burning up all that is sensual and false, illuminating every chamber of the soul, and making God visible in its beams. The atmosphere around these hearts must be cleared of all the mists and fogs of evil, if we would see the Eternal Sun in His glory. The moral mirror of the soul must be burnished well before it can reflect the glorious image of its God. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

Godly Sorrow.

THIS "sorrow, which worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of," is truly a "blessed" sorrow. Though painful, it is only the Great

Physician probing the moral wound before He applies the "sovereign balm;" it is but the passing tempest, whose frowning fury is clearing the air, watering the earth, making bright the sky, and unveiling in fairer beauties the face of the world.

Mercy.

MERCY is a modification of benevolence; it is benevolence called out in a certain direction and feeling for a certain class, and that class the suffering. Mercy is benevolence commiserating the sufferer. Nature, in her ten thousand modes, expresses God's benevolence. Christ, in His sympathies and prayers, His doctrines and doings, His sufferings and death, expresses God's mercy. He is benevolence in contact

with suffering; so long as we are in a world of suffering, it is required of us that our benevolence should go out in the form of *mercy*. Mercifulness befits our situation, and is essential to our spiritual culture.

The God-revealing Love.

A TRUE disciple is a light: an orb reflecting the rays of the Father of lights. There is more of God seen in a good man than the whole material universe can unfold; he is a partaker of the Divine nature; God shines *in* him and *through* him. Light brings distant things near; scenes far away are brought into immediate contact with the eye, and paint their image on the soul, through light. Even distant stars are brought close home to our hearts through the pale and gentle beams they shed on our path. Even so it is with the character of a *true* disciple: his conversation, his conduct, his spirit, his life, throw such a light upon the moral eye of men as to bring God, duty, and eternity very near.

Influence.

MAN'S social history is pre-eminently that of influence. Christ refers to a physical fact, the influence of one kind of matter upon another, in order to express the power that man puts forth upon man. Science gives us to understand that the principle of influence pervades every part of the material universe; that the fluttering of an insect's wing sends its vibrations to the remotest

orb in the great field of space. Be this as it may, man influences man. "*No man liveth unto himself.*" Each influences and is influenced. No one is either above or beneath the modifying touch of this subtle, all-penetrating and ever-flowing element of power. By it man multiplies his moral self, gives immortality and universality to the ideas that spring from his intellect and the principles that shape his life. The words that drop from his lips fall as pebbles into the centre of a placid lake, creating a series of undulating and ever widening circles over the whole expanse. Thus the spirit of past generations throbs in us; and down through posterity it shall flow, and be the moral life-blood of the men that are to be.

Interdependence.

THE principle of mutual dependence is one of the most absolute to which we are subject. No man is independent of another; and, as a rule, those who pride themselves on their imaginary independence, are the most dependent. The diversities which exist in the *intelligent powers, mental attainments, the secular positions, the ages, and general capabilities* of men, give universal sweep and resistless energy to this principle—interdependence. Man is dependent upon man for his education, his support, his protection, his comfort, and his religion. Who does not see that this law necessitates influence? There may be beings living together who are entirely independent of each other.

There may be such a perfect equality between their *being* and *circumstances*, that one has no power either to help or injure another. They may derive their blessings *direct* from the Fountain, and not through the channel of mutual operation. If such creatures there be, we see not how they *could* influence each other. Such, however, is not man's case; he is ever *giving* to and *receiving* from his brother, he cannot live without it.

Life in Light.

WHAT WAS "of life the breath,"
Which God to Adam gave?
What is man's curse—that death
From which Christ came to save?
Life, death, salvation, all—
What mysteries combine!
Man rises through his fall;
By death gains life Divine!

He's but of yesterday,
And nothing, now, can know;
This tenement of clay
He'll presently outgrow:
Yearning for greater light,
Still round his cell he
gropes;
Daily he dies in night,
Yet lives because he hopes.
I know that I don't know
The worst nor yet the best;
Dreading to sink below,
I long to rise and rest;
With night and doubt I cope,
But faith sees light above;
In utter darkness, hope
Goes out with light and love!
When this dream-life will end,
What shall I, must I be?
I now can't comprehend
What I shall know and see.
Lord! help my unbelief,
In death true life to win!
Faith only brings relief
From moral death, from sin.
E. T. D.
Meirion, Abergela.

SCIENTIFIC FACTS AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

"Books of Illustration" designed to help preachers, are somewhat, we think, too abounding. They are often made up to a great extent of anecdotes from the sentimental side of life, and not always having a healthful influence or historic foundation. We find that preachers and hearers are getting tired of such. Albeit illustrations are needed by every speaker who would interest the people, and are sanctioned by the highest authority. Nature itself is a parable. Hence we have arranged with a naturalist who has been engaged in scientific investigation for many years, to supply the *Humilist* with such reliable and well-ascertained facts in nature as cultured and conscientious men may use with confidence, as mirrors of morals and diagrams of doctrines.

The Monkey: Ludicrous Effects of Imitation.

THE Indians, when they wish to destroy monkeys, come to their haunts with basins full of water or honey; they wash their faces in the sight of these animals, and then, substituting pots of

thin glue instead of the water or honey, they retire out of sight. The monkeys, as soon as they are gone, come down and wash their faces likewise, and, sticking their eyes together, become blind, and are easily captured. In other places they bring boots into the wood,

and putting them on and off, leave them well lined with glue or a sort of fluid lime; so that when the unhappy monkeys put them on, they stick fast, and hinder their escape.

What ludicrous results may be observed where men imitate with servility the doings of others! The ambitious young preacher who is setting up as a genius, copies the peculiarities in attitude and manner of the popular preacher near him, and causes actual merriment in the very matters in which he thinks he is most effective. Tom Snob, the rich soap-boiler, and his corpulent spouse, affect the airs, elegancies, and foibles of the aristocracy; and either get themselves into serious difficulties by the attempt, or at best make a fortunate escape amidst the derision of all beholders. These men, in their antics, are very like the monkeys we have been speaking of. How many men have found it impossible to extricate themselves from difficulties into which they have been drawn through attempting to put on the boots of the aristocracy!

The Appetite of some Animals: Consumption without Assimilation.

CATERPILLARS daily eat double their weight in food; a cow eats forty-six lbs. daily; and a mouse eats eight times as much, in proportion to its own weight, as is eaten by a man.

Often we see men consuming substance which seems of no service to them, spending money which appears in no way to profit them, appropriat-

ing, without any advantage to themselves, that which would make many others happy.

The Magnet: The Love for Extremes.

THE force of attraction varies in different parts of the magnet; it is strongest at the two ends and is totally wanting in the middle. This may be seen very clearly when a magnetic bar is placed in iron filings; these become arranged round the ends of the bar in feathery tufts which decrease towards the middle of the bar, where there are none. That part of the surface of the bar where there is no visible magnetic force, is the *neutral line*; and the points near the ends of the bars, where the attraction is greatest, are the *poles*.

It is undeniable that extremes have an attractive force for men. In all departments of thought and action you see the masses attracted to the extreme view; and though truth is usually between the extremes, Whigs and Tories, sectaries and infidels, speaking of them as classes, are not satisfied with anything but one extreme or the other. Like the iron filings on the magnet, so men, in matters of opinion, shun the neutral line and rush to one or other of the opposite poles of thought.

The Crust of the Earth: The Common Bond of Animated Nature.

WHEN, after a lengthened voyage and far from home, we for the first time set foot in a tropical land, we are pleased to recognise in the rocks and mountain

masses the same mineral species we have left behind,—clay, slate, basaltic, amygdaloid, and the like,—the universal distribution of which seems to assure us that the old crust of the earth has been formed independently of the external influences of existing climes. But this well-known crust is covered with forms of a foreign flora. Yet here, surrounded by unwonted vegetable forms, impressed with a sense of the overwhelming amount of the tropical organizing force, in presence of an exotic nature in all things, the native of the northern hemisphere has revealed to him the wonderful power of adaptation inherent in the human mind. We feel ourselves, in fact, akin to all that is organized; and though at first we may fancy that one of our native landscapes, with its appropriate features, like a native dialect, would present itself to us in

more attractive colours and rejoice us more than the foreign scene with its profusion of vegetable life, we nevertheless soon begin to find that we are burghers, men under the shade of the palms of the torrid zone. In virtue of the mysterious connection of all organic forms, and unconsciously, the feeling of the necessity of this connection lies within us. These new exotic forms present themselves to our fancy as exalted and ennobled out of those which surrounded our childhood. Blind feeling, therefore, and the enchantment of the phenomena perceived by sense, in the same measure as reason and the combining faculty, lead us to the recognition which now penetrates every grade of humanity, that a common bond, according to determinate laws, and therefore eternal, embraces the whole of animated nature.

BIBLICAL ANECDOTES AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

No. V.

Envy.

It is said that unto CAIN and his offering God had not respect, and he was very wroth; it was the wrath of envy. RACHAEL, the wife of Jacob, was envious of her sister Leah. Truly unjust, even to cruelty, was any such sentiment; and thence mark the consequences: the gall which flowed from this virulent passion poisoned the cup of her enjoyments, and in no small degree marred the

happiness of her married life. Gloom spread over Jacob's household as envy entered his abode; and to this sinful passion was also due the banishment of Joseph from his father's roof, as well as the proposed act of his brothers, the consummation of which would have rendered them fratricides. Again, we may remark how severe was the penalty MIRIAM had to pay for allowing a spirit of envy to rise up against her brother's wife, which ever envenomed her otherwise kindly feeling to-

ward Moses himself. Then the ENEMIES OF DANIEL offer a like warning against the indulgence of this sinful passion. That able minister having been promoted to the highest dignity by King Darius "because an excellent spirit was in him," the presidents and princes endeavoured to effect his ruin; but, by a just recoil, the same cruel death which in their malice and envy they had sought to bring on him befell them and their families. The history of SAUL affords ample proof that envy is far more easily roused by those below us in station and wealth, if they but throw a shadow over our path, than even by such as have attained the highest distinctions or greatest opulence. Early in David's history we are told that Saul greatly loved him. But when, at a later period, relationship and gratitude might well have promised an increase of kindly affection,

envy stood in the way, the King viewing with jealous eye David's successes over the Philistines; and this criminal feeling gained additional intensity when the women were heard to sing, "Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands." What availed rank, or power, or wealth, while a lowly subject had eclipsed him in valour? Nothing could bring a balm to Saul's wounded spirit but the death of his servant; and it was this base and senseless passion which goaded him on to those unjustifiable acts whereby he incurred God's displeasure and finally brought about his own fatal end. Thus we see that even the most exalted ranks are not free from this dire infirmity of mind; and this should lead us, whatsoever be our walk of life, to guard our hearts "with all diligence," and beware both of a covetous disposition and of a spirit of envy. T. L. M.

Homiletical Breviaries.

No. CCXLI.

The Transcendent Name.

"A NAME WHICH IS ABOVE EVERY NAME."—*Phil. ii. 9.*

PERHAPS all intelligent creatures through the universe have appellations by which they are distinguished from others and recognized. Angels have their names, Michael, Gabriel, etc., etc. Some names are *greater* than others. It often happens that the name of one man hovers in significance and grandeur above the names of a whole generation. Such names as Moses, Paul, Luther, Howard, Garibaldi. But the Apostle declares here that there is One name above every name, either on earth or in heaven. His name is "above every name," I. In its PERFECTION. (1) It

is *idealistically* perfect. The human mind has never formed a higher conception of moral excellence than is found embodied in the life of Christ. (2) It is *independently* perfect. The perfection of the most perfect men, such as it is, has always been derived. They were "made perfect" by the agency of others and the Spirit of God. But Christ was "harmless, undefiled." His name is "above every name," II. In its **POWER**. (1) It is a *morally reformatory* name. That name is a moral talisman. It has wrought wonders in the souls of men, turned millions from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto the love of God. (2) It is a *morally imperial* name. It wins the mastery of the soul. "One is your master, even Christ." A master, not by force, but by love, not of mere bodily service, but of all the activities of the soul, nay the soul itself. His name is "above every name," III. In its **DOMINION**. The dominion of that name is (1) *Thorough*. How partial the dominion of the world's greatest emperors! It does not touch the central forces of the soul. Christ rules the soul and brings into captivity every thought into obedience to Himself. The dominion is (2) *Universal*. There are names that have a dominion in some departments of life, such as commerce, science, literature, that are not known in others. There are names that wield a power in some localities that the great world knows nothing of—mere local magnates. But the name of Jesus is universal. All heaven knows it and bows to it, the best men on earth know it and reverence it, and to it one day every knee shall bow. The dominion is (3) *Perpetual*. The greatest of human names, though emblazoned in history and cut in marble or brass, die out in time, sink into the eternal silence of oblivion. But this name will endure for ever and for ever.

No. CCXLII.

Exemplary Maternal Love.

"AND BEHOLD A WOMAN OF CANAAN," etc.—*Matt. xv. 22-28.**

IN this narrative we have exemplary maternal love, I. **VICARIOUSLY SUFFERING**. The actual sufferings of the daughter were perhaps great; but the sufferings which the mother endured by sympathy were greater still. Vicarious sufferings are always great in proportion to the amount of love that one has in his

* See my "Genius of the Gospel" *in loco*.

nature. Hence the greatest sufferer on earth was Christ. He bore the sins and "carried the sorrows" of the world. We have here exemplary maternal love, II. **IMPORTUNATELY PRAYING.** "Have mercy on me, O Lord Thou Son of David;" and again, "Lord, help me." Her importunity became more and more intensified as Christ appeared to disregard her case. (1) He was *reticent*. "He answered her not a word." (2) He was *disparaging*. "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." And again, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs." But all this, instead of cooling, only intensified the ardour of her entreaties. The more importunate we are, the more qualified we become to appreciate the mercy we require. Our importunity, whilst it does not influence the giver, qualifies the receiver for the gift. We have here exemplary maternal love. III. **GLORIOUSLY SUCCEEDING.** "O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." Why did she succeed? Not because she was importunate, but because her importunity was that of love, and not of selfishness—importunity growing out of an unbounded faith in Christ as the great Deliverer of mankind.

CONCLUSION.—Mothers, let the conduct of this mother become your example.

No. CCXLIII.

A Glorious Allegation.

"THIS MAN RECEIVETH SINNERS."—*Luke xv. 2.*

HERE is, I. An allegation that CANNOT BE DENIED. Christ did receive sinners. Zaccheus, the woman in Simon's house, Mary Magdalene, Peter, and numerous others. II. An allegation THAT IS IN REALITY A COMMENDATION. First: *It reveals the greatest condescension.* What is the condescension of a monarch taking a pauper by the hand and leading him into his palace, compared to the condescension of the infinitely Holy One taking the polluted into His presence? Secondly: *It meets the greatest necessity.* All men are sinners, all sinners are more or less miserable, no one can deliver them but a Being of Almighty love and spotless purity. The great teachers of antiquity, did they receive sinners? Not one of them. III. An allegation THAT OFFERS HOPE TO THE WORLD. What hope have I that this world, which for long centuries has been groaning under the weight of sin and sorrows,

will be delivered? On what is the hope founded? Not on the advancement of science or literature, or material civilization, but on this, that "This man receiveth sinners." He can do, and He only, all that sinners require.

No. CCXLIV.

A Sordid Religion.

"WHO IS THERE EVEN AMONG YOU THAT WOULD SHUT THE DOORS FOR NOUGHT? NEITHER DO YE KINDLE FIRE ON MINE ALTAR FOR NOUGHT. I HAVE NO PLEASURE IN YOU, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS, NEITHER WILL I ACCEPT AN OFFERING AT YOUR HAND."—*Mal. i. 10.*

THESE words bring under our attention the subject of a *sordid* religion, and indicate two things concerning it. I. It is COMMON. "Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought?" These words were uttered upwards of two thousand years ago, and the religion of men then was a sordid religion, and to this day there is no religion more popular. It is in truth the *Established* religion of the land. This is seen (1) In the popular *prayers*. Whether those prayers are the written ones, as in the Episcopal Church, or extemporaneous, as in Nonconformist communions, the self-seeking spirit is rampant in all. In them you have the soul, not lost in the raptures of devotion, not struggling to free itself of all that is ungodlike and wrong, but shrieking at hell and crying for heaven. Were there no heaven or hell, such prayers would have no meaning in them; and yet, did no heaven or hell exist in the universe, men should, "pray without ceasing." This is seen (2) In the popular *preaching*. What is the preaching that crowds the churches and chapels of Christendom? Not the preaching that exhibits religion as the grand end of the soul, the true Paradise, but as the means by which Gehenna is to be avoided and Paradise obtained. Suppose that this week there came to every man in England a deep strong conviction, unmingled with one shadow of doubt, that there was no heaven or hell in God's creation, would not that conviction be the death-blow of what is called public worship? All the temples would be deserted. And yet true religion would be as beautiful and as binding a thing as ever. Another thing which the words indicate concerning sordid religion is, II. It is GOD DISPLEASEING. "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand." It is displeasing to Him (1) Because it is *repugnant to love*. Something like this a noble father would

say to his son, who paid him attention only for what he could get, a true husband would say to the wife who did the same. Genuine love sickens at such service, disdains and refuses it. Pure love in man is the same as pure love in God. It is displeasing to Him (2) Because it is *opposed to happiness*. It is an eternal law of mind, that it can never be happy in self-seeking. He who searches for happiness as an end, will never find it. It will always be to him a mirage; as he thinks he approaches it, it will vanish into thin air. God's great law in His spiritual universe is this,—that souls shall only get happiness as they pursue goodness. When goodness is pursued as an end, full happiness gushes up at every step in the march. When will the time come when men will be able to sing with Xavier,—

“ My God, I love Thee not because
 I hope for heaven thereby,
 Nor yet because who love Thee not
 Must burn eternally ”?

No. CCXLV.

A Foregleam of the Gospel.

“GOD DOTH DEVISE MEANS, THAT HIS BANISHED BE NOT EXPELLED FROM HIM.”—2 *Sam.* xiv. 14.

EXPOSITORS generally consider that the woman of Tekoah, in this appeal, alludes to the merciful Divine provision by which a man-slayer might, at the death of the High Priest, return to his home from the city of refuge, to which he, red-handed, had fled from the red-handed avenger of blood. Doubtless David would understand more; and to us, Gospel in hand, the words mean more than to her or to David. They illustrate the great facts: I. THAT SINFUL MEN ARE MORAL EXILES. This is borne out (1) by Scripture, (a) in statement, (β) intimation, (γ) parable; (2) by the experience of the sinful; (3) by the confession of the penitent. II. THE GOSPEL IS GOD'S MEANS OF RECOVERING moral exiles. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself.” The Gospel (1) Reveals clear way of return; (2) Supplies sufficient motive; (3) Promises abundant help.

URWAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

My Ministry at Stockwell.

(Continued from Vol. I., Enlarged Series, page 462.)

THE letter which I received from my deacons during one of my visits to Haverfordwest, and which gave me, as I have said, some amount of pain, contained a Resolution to the following effect,—a Resolution they had passed in my absence:—“*That a portion of the revenue derived from the pew rents of the Chapel be applied to the liquidation of the debt.*” This resolution was forwarded in a letter written by the Secretary, which expressed, on the part of himself and his colleagues, high appreciation both of my character and ministry. I had no reason to doubt their sincerity in this respect; personally each one had behaved to me, not only as a loving friend, but as an admiring disciple. My object in giving the Resolution here, and the letter which I wrote in reply, is simply to show the very little practical interest which those who are the most enthusiastic in their admiration of a minister have in his temporal concerns. Whilst they listen with rapt attention to his sermons, extol in no measured terms their transcendent merits, greet him with loving looks and enthusiastic grasps in the vestry and in the streets, the question does not come up to them as to how their idol lives, whether he has an income equal to his expenditure or not. They seem to think that the man who appears before them Sunday after Sunday, pleading with the Infinite Father on their behalf, leading their devotions, and pouring from his lips what they consider eloquence of no ordinary character, feeds on heavenly manna, lives on angels’ food, that he needs no butcher or baker, and has nothing to do with the temporalities of this mundane scene. The following is the letter I sent in reply to the resolution. Contrary to my habits, I kept a copy of it, and to my astonishment the copy has just been discovered, I therefore give it *verbatim et literatim*.

“In relation to your proposition, which you say was “freely canvassed and unanimously agreed to,” I must say that it has greatly surprised me. Antecedently I should have said, that no intelligent member of our Church who understood the principle on which I received my income, would be capable of suggesting such an idea. I believe, however, it has originated, not in any unkind feeling towards myself, but in the want of calm and personal reflection on the subject. It is only another evidence to me of the difficulty of men in Committees to grasp the principles involved in the questions which they canvass and the Resolutions which they pass.

Your proposition must be regarded in one of two aspects, either as a solicitation to my benevolence or as a demand on my justice. If I am to regard it in the former light, I can have no objection. You have as much right to ask me to support the cause of piety and benevolence as I have to ask you.

But I cannot suppose that you forward such a formal proposition as an appeal to my benevolence; I am therefore bound to regard it as expressing on your part an idea of claim, and that you consider yourselves as having an authority to put forth such a request. If this be the case, with all respectfulness, yet with the most unwavering decision, I *repudiate* such an appeal. This I do, not on the ground of personal feeling or private interests, but on that of great principles, the recognition of which is essential to our harmonious co-operation.

Your proposition overlooks the following facts.—I. That the financial results of my labour are my own. It is now a doctrine universally admitted in civil ethics, that the *product of a man's labour is his own*. It is one of his fundamental rights. Christianity does not divest a man of this right because he is a minister. On the contrary, it enforces this right on the Churches. "Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." "The labourer is worthy of his hire." "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?" A devoted minister's income is a righteous claim, not a human charity.

The funds of an unendowed dissenting chapel are every fraction of them created by the toil of the ministering man—they are talents put into his hands, for which he is responsible; and he is bound, not by human authority, but by the authority of conscience and God, to devote them to His glory.

If this principle is correct, I can no more allow you to *dictate* to me as to how I should devote the proceeds of my labour, than I could expect you to allow me to dictate to you in such a matter. The product of my labour is *my* talent, not *yours*: and the employment of my talent is *my* duty, not yours.

Your proposition overlooks the fact—II. That I do not hold you responsible for my income. Had you guaranteed me a fixed sum, whether large or small, there would have been a manifest propriety in your asking, nay demanding, that all which came in beyond the amount should be placed at your disposal; but you have made me no such pledge. I have never asked for such a pledge, I entered on the sphere when in a low state, without asking a single man for financial help, though I needed it. I took the responsibility on myself, trusting to God for support. I am at a loss therefore know on what ground you request me to devote a moiety of my self-produced, contingent, and limited income to the discharge of a public debt. I regard you as brothers, as advisers, as helps, but not as *employers*, and therefore deprecate such dictation.

Your proposition overlooks the fact—III. That the enlargement of the chapel is a public enterprise. If it were an undertaking to promote the temporal interest of the minister, then there would be something like justice in those who contributed to the object requiring that all the increase should go toward the liquidation until accomplished.

But is this the case? For my own part I most solemnly disclaim all participation in such an idea. If any friend has contributed from such a motive, while I would appreciate his personal kindness, I would warn him of the improper motive by which he has taken up the case.

We all profess,—I trust we are sincere,—to be moved by a desire to

promote the cause of truth and the salvation of souls. We regard it as the cause of universal benevolence.

If then it is a public cause, why should any one seek to tax my income for the general good? Does my ministry rob me of the most important prerogative of a man, namely the right to dispose of his own according to his own free conscience? Did my income amount to £1000 per annum, I trust that God would enable me to appropriate whatever I could to the advancement of His cause.

I have thus given you some reasons for declining your suggestion. I might have stated others of a different character. I might have said that my present income, with a family increasing, with children whose education is scarcely commenced, and who, in case of my death, will be left without a provision—I say, I might have said that my present income in such a state of things is barely equal to my demands.

But were my income treble the amount, neither self-respect nor conscience would allow me for a moment to entertain your proposition.

I am, Gentlemen, yours faithfully,

DAVID THOMAS."

The spirit of independency which breathes in this letter, written some twenty-five years ago, has rather surprised me. I know that I have such a spirit now; but I am an older man, and my ministerial *status*, moral culture; material circumstances improved. I can afford to be independent now, better than I could then. I confess that this letter, the copy of which has somewhat accidentally just fallen into my hand, and the particulars of which I had long since forgotten, yields me, as I read it now, some amount of gratification. It shows to me that I have been all along what I profess to be, an *independent* minister: that, to use the language of Shakspeare, I have been living with my "neck out of the collar." Nor is my faith in the *principles* set forth in the letter touching a minister's income, weakened by all these years. On the contrary it is strengthened by reflection and deepened by experience. The revenue of an unendowed Church, where the income is not guaranteed, is the produce of the minister; and he has not only a right to look after it, but he is solemnly bound to do so. No deacon or manager has any right whatever to apply any portion of the funds of such a Church to any purpose without the full sanction of the man who produced them. Yet this is generally done. A moral anomaly this, and often the source of enormous mischief. Ministers may call themselves independent; but they are more or less slaves until they take their stand upon this grand principle, and use their deacons, not as their employers and paymasters, but rather as their agents and stewards for the time being.

But I have referred to this old Resolution, not for the purpose of reflecting dishonour on any of the men concerned in its production. Most of them, if not all, are gone to their

rest; and more honourable and generous men are rarely found in connection with any diaconate, and they were amongst the warmest friends I have ever had. But to show how capricious and insecure is oftentimes the income of Congregational ministers. Sometimes the income of the minister, as in this case, is neglected through sheer thoughtlessness. The officers were merchants, absorbed in their own worldly affairs; they heard me preach on the Sunday, and expressed, often in the strongest terms, their appreciation of my ministry, as I have already intimated, and yet never concerned themselves earnestly with the question as to how I was to live. The fact is, neither deacons nor Churches have yet got a *conscience* on this subject; hence I find ministers, in all parts of the country, all but starving. It is time to speak out on this subject; and if elderly ministers will not do it, who will? Who else have the authority and the power? For my "brethren's" sake I will speak. No true minister, of course, will ever preach with an eye to secular results. All mercenary considerations will be borne down and engulfed by the ever-deepening current of spiritual sympathies and aims. His main purpose will be, not to acquire wealth, but to win souls; still, in common with all men, he has his physical and domestic wants. Food, raiment, and a home are as necessary to his existence as to that of any man; and according to the present arrangements of society, these are only supplied by money. Whence is he to receive this? As a general rule, it comes only as the reward of labour. He labours. The office of a true minister is no sinecure; there is no work so arduous as his; it is the labour, not of limbs, but of brain and heart; it is a constant drain upon the very fountains of nervous energy. Nor is there any work so useful to society. In the reason of things, therefore, has any worker a stronger claim to secular support than he? If his labour is the most arduous and the most useful, ought it not to secure the most ample secular returns? Paul recognises and enforces this natural and common-sense claim, "Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not the fruit thereof? or, who feedeth a flock and eateth not of the milk of the flock? For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care of oxen? If we have sown unto you spiritual things is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?" In the light of these words how unreasonable does the conduct of some people appear in relation to their minister. There are men who receive and expect large services from him, and who

make little or no return. For a paltry pound or two per annum, he must preach to them thrice in the week, pay them frequent pastoral visits, or else they set up their complaints against him and seek to spread a spirit of dissatisfaction through his sphere. There are families in connection with congregations who spend more on perfumery, or on toys for their children, than to support the man who is giving the best energies of his cultivated mind to save their souls. A man takes a pew in the church, pays his five or six pounds per annum, a less sum than he pays his scullery maid, and for that he expects twelve months' preaching and great pastoral attention. What is still worse, still more unreasonable, he regards the paltry sum he subscribes rather as a charity than a debt. Charity indeed! Call the money you pay to your grocer, draper, physician, or landlord charity; but in the name of all that is true, in reason and justice, do not call what you tender to the man to whom you owe your best ideas, your holiest impressions, who gives to you the choicest products of his educated and sanctified intellect, charity. It is he that shows charity, not you; your gold is a miserable compensation for the results of his sweating brain and ever-anxious heart. False delicacy has too long prevented the preacher from expounding and enforcing the doctrine that "the Lord hath ordained that they which preach the Gospel shall live of the Gospel." In the Established Church the working curates are pauperized by the grasping cupidity of the hierarchy; and in Dissenting denominations, the pastors of small towns and villages are only half-supported through the inconsideration and meanness of the people. I hold it to be the duty of every Church to keep the minister's mind free from all secular anxieties, not only by providing him and his family with the current necessities of this life, but, by the instrumentalities of Assurance Societies, freeing his mind from all solicitude about the circumstances of his family in case of his death. I have heard of Churches who annually send large sums to the support of missionaries abroad, whose own pastors are bowed down in spirit through the constant pressure of secular difficulties.

The results of this letter were threefold.

(To be continued.)

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

CASSELL'S LIBRARY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE. SELECTED, EDITED, AND ARRANGED BY HENRY MORLEY, PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, ETC. ILLUSTRATED. Parts I. to XII. London: Cassell, Petter & Galpin, Ludgate Hill.

An extract from the Editor's Introduction will give our readers the best information as to the purpose and nature of this undertaking. "The purpose of this work is to provide a compact and comprehensive library of English thought, from the earliest times to our own day. The arrangement will be chronological. Characteristics of our Celtic and Teutonic forefathers; the days of transition, after the Conquest through the time of Chaucer, with the rising spirit of the Reformation, to the England of Elizabeth; the conflicts of opinion by which England advanced from the days of her first Stuart king to the Revolution of 1688; and the course of thought and action by which we have been brought to the England of to-day—not without illustration of the character of our own time, by selections from the works of our chief living writers, where we have leave to introduce them. All these should be found here represented, in such order as to make this Library of use to the student of the history and literature of our country. Each piece of prose or verse will be set in a brief narrative, showing when and by whom it was written, as far as that can be told, with here and there such information as may serve to secure fuller enjoyment of some part of the mind of a people not 'slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit, acute to invent, subtle and sinewy to discourse, not beneath the reach of any point, the highest that human capacity can soar to.' So Milton described his countrymen, and the reader of these volumes will see that he spoke truth."

The volumes are to contain selections from the works of the greatest poets, prose authors, and dramatists; such selections will be the most characteristic and choice, the short poems given in full. And the selections will be such as will give a true idea of the general current of the author's thoughts. The work will be freely illustrated with copies from trustworthy portraits, sketches of places, contemporary illustrations of manners and customs, and incidents described and referred to in the pieces quoted. If modern Englishmen are to become acquainted with the literature of their countrymen from the earliest times, such a *compen-*

dium as this is indispensable in this age of rapidly multiplying volumes. Of course, whilst the plan of the work is excellent, unless the Editor is a competent man, there may be a failure in its execution. Happily in this case the competency of the Editor is unquestionable. The name of Henry Morley furnishes at once a guarantee both for the great excellency and the extensive circulation of the work. We shall await with deep interest the successive numbers, meanwhile we give this valuable book a most hearty recommendation.

TRAVELS IN PORTUGAL. By JOHN LATOUCHE. WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY RIGHT HON. SOTHEBON-ESTCOURT. SECOND EDITION. London: Ward, Lock & Tyler, Paternoster Row.

These "travels" first appeared in consecutive numbers of the new *Quarterly Magazine*, under the title of "Notes of Travels in Portugal." Those notes, however, the Author informs us, were not taken down during his travels, for he prosecuted his tour without any design of publishing. The notes, therefore, are taken from the book of memory. The volume gives, not only a very readable, but a very instructive account of the home and the manners of a people of no distinguished excellence, but still worth studying on account of their influence upon European life. The Author says, "I would wish my dissuasion from Portuguese travel to be accepted only by the mere tourist,—the ignorant, conceited, incurious, moneyed tramp,—for whom so much deserved contempt has been expressed in current literature. Those who go to Portugal to enjoy a pleasant winter climate will, as a rule, I think, do well to go. Those who go to see a strange people with a famous name in European history; to watch the successful working of a representative Constitution, to study archæology, ecclesiology, or natural history, or again those who simply desire to take a month's relaxation in spring, summer, or winter in quite a new country (with no intention to 'do' the country in ordinary tourist fashion), will, I think, not regret a visit to Portugal." Whilst to those who wish to visit Portugal, this work will be of great value, it is capable of affording much interest and information to all. Its descriptions are striking; it contains many stirring anecdotes; and the style has much brightness and vivacity.

THE SPIRITUAL MAGAZINE, WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST. Edited by GEORGE SEXTON, P.H.D., LL.D. THIRD SERIES. VOL. I. London: Smart & Allen, London House Yard.

Spiritualism is ridiculed by some and studied only by a few. Although we have read some things connected with *séances*, having the shape of absurdities, we have never had an opportunity of giving the subject that attention which would authorize us to pronounce for or against it. A subject that has amongst its adherents and advocates such names as William Howitt, Dr. Hitchburn, Rowland Young, Dr. Sexton, and many other

able men, demands, to say the least, the respectful attention of all genuine lovers of the truth. The fact that Dr. Sexton,—a man of distinguished abilities, scholastic culture, and scientific attainments,—has become the Editor of *The Spiritual Magazine*, should place the subject beyond the laughter of all but fools. This is a volume of rare interest, brimful of psychological information, and redolent with noble thought running out in eloquent paragraphs. Amongst the valuable articles in this volume of the Magazine, we would invite special attention to the Editor's "Crystal Palace Lectures" on the subject. Also his lecture on "Immortality as taught in the Old Testament." These discourses, apart from the merits of Spiritualism, cannot fail to render service to every thoughtful reader, rousing the intellect with their suggestive touch, thrilling the sensibilities with their stirring utterances, and charming the imagination with their oratoric chime.

THE LIFE OF JAMES DIXON, D.D., WESLEYAN MINISTER. Written by his Son, R. W. DIXON, M.A. London: Wesleyan Conference Office, Castle Street.

This is the biography of a distinguished Wesleyan minister, written by his son, who is an Assistant Minor Canon in Carlisle Cathedral Church. Dr. Dixon, whose origin was humble, rose by the vigour of a mind inspired by Christianity to a foremost place in the religious community to which he attached himself in early life. From the account that is here given of him, it seems that Methodism has few such thinkers, preachers, or platform orators now. We have a dim recollection of hearing him when a youth at a missionary meeting in Exeter Hall; and although we cannot recall any of his utterances, we remember the consciousness of an entrancing influence. The impressions we experienced seem to have been the kind of impression he generally made on his hearers, both in the pulpit and on the platform. He was a zealous Methodist; but, what is infinitely higher, a Christly man and messenger. This moment our eyes have dropped upon a paragraph in the volume which we hold in our hand that seems to us typical of a noble soul. It is from a letter which he writes to his wife, when sojourning as an invalid at Richmond in the cottage of his mother-in-law, Mrs. Watson, wife of Richard Watson, the distinguished Wesleyan preacher. "I see in my rambles in the park (that is Richmond Park), in looking at the oaks, that they begin to decay neither at the top nor the bottom, at one end or the other, that there is nothing regular in the process; but a blight strikes in here or there in the trunk of the tree, as by chance, produces decay and rottenness around; and then, from the edge of the decayed part, life, as if contending with the progress of death, asserts its rights, and sends forth little stunted branches, totally unlike the development of the original tree. These snatches of life, attempts at growth, I see, become more and more feeble according to the age of the tree, till nothing more can be done, and time, or some storm, finishes the business, and the noblest tree of the forest

falls. You will know how to apply this. But something which never dies—this is the man. Oh, may we live so as to ensure its immortal happiness ! ”

RUDIMENTS OF THEOLOGY: A FIRST BOOK FOR STUDENTS. By JOHN PILKINGTON NORRIS, B.D. London: Rivingtons & Co., Waterloo Place.

This is a compendious manual of theology, which the learned author prepared at the request of candidates for ordination. The work is divided into three parts: “In the first part the fundamental doctrines of the Creed are considered—the doctrine of God, of God the Son, of His atonement, of God the Holy Ghost, of His sanctifying work by means of the Church and her sacraments. “Relying mainly,” says the author, “on the help I have derived from Hooker, Bull, Pearson, and (most of all) Waterland, I have tried to put the reader's thoughts into orderly shape on each of these subjects. In the second part, by way of illustrating what may be called the method of theological induction, the doctrine of the Atonement is selected, and the student is invited to make a rapid survey of Holy Scripture, with a view to gathering therefrom what seems to be revealed to us respecting that mystery. In the third part, or Appendix, will be found a kind of *stromata* or *panarium* from my own patristic reading, intending chiefly to excite the student's desire to learn more for himself of what the early Fathers thought and wrote in days when the Church's theologians had to hold their own against an adverse world.”

Without endorsing all the theological views put forth in this volume, we prize it as a production of inestimable value. It abounds with sacred learning of the choicest kind, bearing upon the various subjects discussed. The thoughts are those of a man of rare intellectual force, independency, philosophic insight, and scholastic culture. The style is clear, succinct, and strong; there is scarcely a waste word or a feeble sentence. This volume, to us, is worth a thousand of such books as have recently appeared on theological subjects. Our library abounds with works on the Atonement; but we would clear them all out for the author's one short chapter on the great subject, with the extracts in the Appendix. Though his *sponsorship* theory does not give us full philosophic satisfaction, his exposure of the unscripturalness and blasphemy of the *substitutional* theory commands our admiration. Most heartily do we recommend this little work to our readers.

RE-UNION IN THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM, AND OTHER DISCOURSES. By Rev. WILLIAM ANDERSON, LL.D. WITH INTRODUCTORY SKETCH BY GEORGE CLARKE HUTTON, D.D. London: Hodder & Stoughton, Paternoster Row.

“The present volume,” says the prefatory notice, “with three exceptions, consists of selections from unpublished discourses by the late Dr. W. Anderson. For a number of years before his death Dr. Anderson

had been requested to publish another series of sermons, and with a view to meet this wish had in several instances re-written what he had prepared for the pulpit. The discourses so revised are included among those now issued; but while the majority of the sermons given have not had this advantage, and the Editor alone is responsible for the choice which has been made from among the MSS. left in his possession, every care has been bestowed on the proof-sheets; and it is believed that the discourses are such as Dr. Anderson would have himself selected for publication; and that, as a whole, they will be found in all respects worthy of their gifted author."

Dr. Anderson was neither an ordinary man, thinker, or preacher. All who heard him, or read his works, acknowledge his superiority and confess his greatness. We have more than once in our pages recommended his works, and we have only to repeat what we have said.

OLD TRUTHS IN NEW LIGHTS; OR, AN EARNEST ENDEAVOUR TO RECONCILE MATERIAL SCIENCE WITH SPIRITUAL SCIENCE AND WITH SCRIPTURE. By the COUNTESS OF CAITHNESS. London: Chapman & Hall, 193, Piccadilly.

The title of this work fully explains its character and object. It advocates with great shrewdness, skill, and strength, Spiritism as opposed to Materialism. It maintains that spirit is the root and sap of the universe, the all-creating, all-fashioning, all-animating power. In doing this it exposes and denounces what it considers to be the scientific weakness and moral irreverence of material scientists, such as Tyndall and Huxley. It calls the phenomena of nature and the declarations of Scripture into its service, and presses them against Scientific Materialism. We have no space to do justice to this work; it requires a "Quarterly Review" to analyze it, reveal its errors, and exhibit its grand truths; for it teems with such. The noble Authoress vindicates on every page her capability for the work she has undertaken. In argument she matches and masters some of her pedantic opponents. She reveals a large and correct acquaintance with the discoveries of modern science; and throughout the pages she marches as the mistress of the walk.

THE PARACLETE: AN ESSAY ON THE PERSONALITY AND MINISTRY OF THE HOLY GHOST: WITH SOME REFERENCE TO CURRENT QUESTIONS. By JOSEPH PARKER, D.D. Second Edition. Henry King & Co., London.

No doubt what is technically called "the work of the Spirit" has not lately been receiving a proportionate amount of attention and thought from Christian writers to that which has been given by them to "the Christ of God." This can be readily and to some extent rightly accounted for by the fact that the Holy Ghost does "not speak of Himself," but "glorifies" Christ. As a sentence or two on the pages now open before us well say, "The sun, in doing all his wonderful work, does not speak of himself; he will not indeed allow us to look at him.

If we turn our eyes upon him, the rebuke is prompt and intolerable: the language of that rebuke is, Look at the earth, not at me. The Holy Ghost, in like manner, does not speak of Himself. He will not answer all our inquiries respecting His personality. We cannot venture with impunity before a well-defined line. To the very last we will inquire What is the Holy Ghost? showing that all attempts at exhaustive definition have ended in failure and disappointment." Nevertheless true thought and, yet more, right feeling about the manifestation of God by His Spirit are to be greatly desired. Whilst the first part of the book, which is "expository and affirmative" necessarily opens up the views that the Church, in different ages and lands, has uttered by the Fathers and great theologues, the second part, which is "critical and controversial," and which deals with the collateral spiritual argument, and the anti-spiritual objections, ably states the opinions of the leaders of thought along those lines, and deals with them. There is all that is most characteristic of Dr. Parker in this volume. Forcefulness of thought, satire, a firm grasp of the commonly accepted central facts of Christianity, and a width of sympathy that is in harmony with the genius of the Gospel. Such a paragraph as we quote is but an illustration of many that are similar to it in truth and terseness. "A reference to Old Testament Scripture will throw some light on the scope of the Spirit's ministry. It may indeed (and we believe it will) show that theology is actually the all-inclusive term, holding within its meaning all the highest aspects and suggestions both of speculative and practical science. The theologian is entitled to claim astronomy, geology, botany, agriculture, and chemistry as sections of theology. If he trifle with this claim, he will not only surrender his best weapon as a controversialist, but mistake brethren and friends for rivals and enemies."

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM: THE MODE, SUBJECT, AND PERPETUITY. By J. RUSSELL LEONARD. Weston-super-Mare. To be had of the Author.

These 160 pages give a fair, full, and yet condensed statement of the views held on this rite. They are from the pen of a thoughtful Baptist layman; and though of course they battle with convictions that we hold, and point to a conclusion to which we do not come, they are none the less valuable.

THE CHALDEAN ACCOUNT OF GENESIS. By GEORGE SMITH. With Illustrations. Third Edition. London: Sampson, Low & Marstone, Fleet Street.

In our last volume, page 213, will be found such a full description of this most valuable work as precludes the necessity of doing more than calling again the attention of our readers to it. Of course every theological library will be incomplete in the absence of this most interesting book.



The Leading Homily.

THE PERSONALITY OF GOD, AND THE MYSTERIOUSNESS OF MAN.

"I WILL PRAISE THEE ; FOR I AM FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE :
MARVELLOUS ARE THY WORKS ; AND THAT MY SOUL KNOWETH RIGHT WELL."—
Psaln cxxxix. 14.

WE never address a mere law or principle after the manner of the text. It is quite evident that the author of it was no pantheist, but a believer in the personality of God. Many men, many minds, no doubt ; but how any one who receives the Bible as in any sense an inspired book, can yet maintain the hypothesis of God's impersonality, I can by no means see. That God, or rather, quasi-God, is something which "makes for righteousness," yet makes no worlds, and knows nothing about what is going on in the worlds made, is a position which certainly does not commend itself to one's common sense. Undoubtedly this is an age of strange notions and opinions, and nobody knows what may be on the morrow ; but to substitute righteousness for God—to take away the Living One, and put in His place a mere abstract idea, calling it, in effect, God, is assuredly to take a liberty with the Sacred, which neither revelation nor reason can countenance ; nay, which both the one and the other most clearly and emphatically discountenance.

There is Power somewhere, because there are effects everywhere ; there is Wisdom somewhere, because there are wise ends accomplished everywhere ; there is Goodness somewhere,

because there are beneficent agencies and resultant gladness everywhere. At any rate, as Butler puts it, "It is *as if* there were a God." If it be said, that God as a person is unthinkable; the reply is, that God as a person is more thinkable than God as a non-person. God is incomprehensible, but God is not unthinkable. His essence defies the grasp of our logic, but His being lies within the reach of our conception. A poor God indeed would He be, if we could make Him fit into the moulds of our logical consciousness. Still, we are not such poor creatures but we can think Him to exist; and that, because we see evidences of His existence. The God-idea, whether rational or irrational, and whencesoever coming, we have. This is a standing and universal fact, make of it what we will. But we cannot comprehend Him. Well; and neither can we comprehend ourselves. Nay, can we comprehend the beginning, the essence, or the end of anything under the sun?

Something has made, and something sustains, the universe. Rather, something *makes* the universe; for is not continuous conservation perpetual creation? And if we go on, and call this something God, maintaining that He consciously made, and consciously makes, the panorama of worlds, is the second proposition less rational than the first? Adopt what view we may on the subject, we cannot steer clear of mystery. Whether we like things "to loom through a mist" or not, mist there is, and of the densest too, which no sunlight of human intellect can drive away. Something exists, therefore something has existed from eternity. Grasp that! Supposing we grant the universe to have existed from eternity; still we must admit that something has made it from eternity. What something? How works it, and where is it? A no-God, be it; but does that free your back from the old man of mystery clinging to you, cold and iron as the shirt of Nessus? The rather, it tightens the grip, and adds pressure to the load. I do not think the sum of mystery is at all increased, but, on the contrary, greatly lessened, by the predication that this making and upholding something is

personal, and therefore, at the same time, cognitive of itself and cognizant of the creation which it has brought into being. There is either something that is a living, personal God; or there is nothing that is a God at all, in any sense justifying the application to it of so great and sacred an appellation. I will tell you what it is that is unthinkable—a universe without a God.

The right way to do, I hold, is to *assume* a God—to take Him for granted at the outset. Suppose that, in consequence of a permanent cloudy atmosphere, we never saw the sun, though we walked about in its light from day to day, yet should we not be justified in assuming its existence as the source of the light? It is proper, I say, to assume a God. This is the Bible way; this is the popular way; and this, I contend, is, at once, the common-sense and the philosophical way. We have not yet got beyond the grand old dictum, "Shall He who formed the eye not see? Shall He who formed the ear not hear? Shall He who formed the heart not understand?" This is an appeal to our common sense; and, doubtless, common sense is competent to be both judge and jury in the matter. In all questions, "to this complexion we must come at last"—to be determined in our decisions by the dictates of common sense, define the term as we may. This, I repeat, is the right way; and it is especially so in the question of a personal God. Let us then ever adhere to it, remembering that,—

"He who once hath missed the righte waye,
The farther he dothe goe the farther he dothe straye."

A God that is not a person, is a mere principle; and a mere principle *per se*, is nothing. A principle is dependent on things, and derives its existence therefrom. Remove its "environment," and it ceases to be. On the other hand, a person is an entity or being proper. Cut away the surroundings, yet the person still is. A Cromwell has his environment, but is greater than it, and rises above his "Lincolnshire bogs" with a phoenix power that will assert itself. Person

and circumstance make righteousness, and without these it is an "airy nothing." "Righteousness" *per se* makes, and "makes for," nothing, because it is nothing. It is an abstraction.

"A breath can make it, and a breath unmake."

Matthew Arnold makes it a God; whilst others there are who call it a sham, and try to get on as well as may be without the pother of it. "Righteousness" is subjective. Take away its *nidus*—make it minus its environment, and what is it but a name? Behold the god! I want a God that is. "I am poor and needy, but the Lord *thinketh* upon me," is the sort of thing for me, and I can be satisfied with nothing less or other.

How refreshing it is to mind and heart, to escape away from the "wandering mazes" of "vain wisdom" and metaphysical hair-splitting, into the upper air of common sense, "far round illumined" with the sunshine of God's blessed word! No something in our text "making for righteousness," but which could not make an atom or a worm, much less "hang the earth upon nothing," to save its life; no thin water-gruel there, of speculative Theism diluted into pantheistic Atheism, and made palatable for sickly belief and sicklier intellectualism with spice of poetry and polish of literary art. No, nothing there of so atrophied and emasculating a character as that sort of miserable ghostism, issuing from the head of modern culture, or ancient Jove come back again; but a THEE—a *bonâ fide* Personality—a living "Father in heaven," who can say, "I AM," of whom it can be predicated, "Thou art, and wast, and art to come—the Almighty," and to whom it can be said, "I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well."

"Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken light of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they."

Yes, thank Heaven! "more than they;" and therefore,

when we pray, we can say, "Our Father." More than they, and therefore, when we meditate, we can give vent to our gratitude in a "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!" More than they; and therefore, when we contemplate the two master mysteries,—the moral law within and the stellar heavens without,—we can exclaim, in the words of the text, "I will praise Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are Thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well!"

"I will praise Thee." "We have modern thought sifting down upon us a fine pantheism which is to melt God and man and nature into one grand, harmonious whole." Too true; but, thank God, this is not all we have. Besides the comforting fact that all modern thought is not pantheistic, we have an olden thought as well; a thought "evolved from the consciousness" of "holy men" in ages—

"When the heavens were nigher to us,
And the gods were more familiar;"

a thought which tells us that "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." And has modern thought anything grander than that? No; nor anything so grand; for this is the unique sublimity which serves as the foundation of all that is sublime. Plato himself had nothing so great as that; for Plato's thinking was bound in and bounded by the chain of "eternal matter," and "an infinite series of causes." In the beginning the heavens and the earth created God, or something very like it, is a chief climax in the philosophy of "modern culture;" for God, you know, is only a *principle*, and therefore dependent on things. He does not make the nature of things, but the nature of things makes Him! Johann Gottlieb Fichte,—who was born, and died,—showed his students one day, "in solemn conclave met," *how to create God*. "I will create God," he said. Now, whether a "created" or a creating God is the greater, and the more probable, not to say possible, judge ye. That God created, or brought into being and fashioned, the atoms and the worlds, is the alpha and

omega of an olden thought, affirmed in ages when wise men, we believe, "wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." And can sufficient reason be shown why we should exchange so sublime a view for the modern Fichtean and transcendental one, so pregnant with despair to the soul of man? I think not. We need a *personal* God, my friends. Our mental nature and our moral nature alike cry aloud for that, and can be comforted and satisfied with nothing less. The solution of nature's problem and the solution of humanity's problem emphatically require that, and that only.

"Admit a God, all other wonders cease.
Deny Him, all is miracle beside."

And admit Him we must. It is a threefold necessity,—mental, moral, and religious,—to ignore or contravene which, is to do violence to the foundation bases of our rational constitution and being. I said before, and I say again, that we must postulate a God. "God must be *believed* in, not *inferred*. Faith is the ground of all conviction, scientific or moral. Why do you believe in the existence of the world? Because it were in vain to resist the voice of intuition. In the same way God exists in your consciousness, and you believe in Him." "I think, therefore I am." I think the world, therefore the world is; and I think a God, therefore a God is. This way of reasoning is no broken cistern; and the last of the propositions I believe to be as irrefragable as the first, which might be put thus: I think myself, therefore I am. I may just observe, that "think" in all the above clauses is used in the sense of "perceive," and that, in harmony with the theory that consciousness is perception, that "there is nothing consciously in the mind but perception, that there is nothing intuitively known but perception, that unless being is perception, it is not intuitively known, and that unless God is (in) perception He is not intuitively known."

For the reasons above indicated, with others not less convincing and satisfactory, the author of our text feels no demur in saying, "I will praise *Thee*." Yes, my friends, a *THEE* was

the grand axis on which an (might I not say *the*?) olden world of religious thought turned round its vast circumference, and rolled on for long centuries of but dimly recorded time. "Modern culture," it must be admitted, has a *thee* too; but its peculiarity is, that it is not a *personal* pronoun. So we will call it a shell without a kernel, a make-believe, and a solecism. Moreover, the pantheism of the day has reversed the order of our text, and its approval to the strangest of anti-theistic phraseologies. "God-intoxicated" as our Spinozists may be, yet they do not say, "I will praise *Thee*;" but they do, in effect, say, Thou shalt praise *Me*; for it is through *Me* that thou hast attained to consciousness. Thou sleepest in the stone, shinest in the star, "refresheth in the breeze," and dremeest in the brute; but in *Me* thou *thinkest*, in *Me* hast developed into personality, or self-consciousness; therefore thou shalt praise *Me*, for thou art fearfully and wonderfully made, in and by means of *Me*. Such, in logical consequence, is modern pantheistic Transcendentalism, so called. But, as compared with the rational theism, the elevated sentiment, and the devout fervour of our text, I leave you to judge whether, in strictness of speech, it ought not the rather to be designated modern atheistic Descendentalism.

Pantheism, it is to be feared, has gained a strong hold upon the higher thinking of our age. It has long been the standing philosophic error of the East; but that the Indo-European nations, with their stronger intellect and higher *morale*, should have become saturated with it, is indeed a consummation devoutly to be lamented and deprecated. But our space forbids enlargement on the theme. I may, however, just remark how much it is to be regretted that no less a personage than our so admirable Poet Laureate should be apparently tainted with this terrible error. I shall only adduce one instance here. In one of his smaller beautiful pieces, he says,—

" Little flower, if I could understand
What thou art, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is."

" *Is* " ! That is to say, God and man are *one*.

"I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

"The proper study of mankind is man."

And what other study is so interesting and profitable?

"Man, 'know thyself,' all wisdom centres there."

Take a stroll among the order called "representative men;" and mark the noble lineaments and still nobler faculties, which present themselves. There is the noble forehead, with its "*os frontis*" rounded like a star, and set star-wards. There are the flashing eyes, kindled with "light that never was on sea and land." There are the flashing thoughts, describing vast lines of movement, and "wandering through eternity." There is the fine moral nature, that can stand erect, whether under adversity or under prosperity—that can maintain its composure alike amid the thunders, and amid the amenities. There is the gentle stirring of friend-ward, home-ward, child-ward, world-word affection, which a word or a look can swell into tidal-flow; no less than there is "the joy of elevated thoughts," arising from contemplation of Nature and of God. The "one stupendous whole" of things, dividing itself into natural on the one hand and into supernatural on the other, the ideal man is not ashamed to think about—"things that are not seen" as well as about "things that are seen and temporal." Why should the term "supernatural" alarm the philosophy of a wise man? It does not. For, viewed aright, what is the supernatural but the natural out of our sight and experience; just as the natural is the supernatural within the domain of sight and experience? Really, God's system is one;—relatively, it is two. It is no sign of wisdom, but of foregone conclusion, to strain at gnats and to stumble over mole-hills. "My mind my kingdom is," is the unchanging motto of the representative man; who, being master there, is always master of the situation, as well as, in a very comprehensive sense, "monarch of all he surveys." To great minds,—greatened to the top of their bent and possibility,—nature and philosophy and religion say, "All things are yours." A

glorious landscape realized by the poet's eye, embellished with the poet's idealities, and appropriated by the poet's soul, is the poet's; and the owner's but in a very subordinate sense, and to the smallest possible extent. For how insignificant is a material sense, compared with a spiritual! "We half create, what we behold." Some think, a great deal more than "half." Be that as it may, yet it is ever true, that "the eye sees what it brings the power to see," that the mind appropriates what it brings the power to appropriate, and that the great soul takes up the world as a very little thing, esteeming the riches of a well-endowed consciousness a greater thing than the treasures of the material universe. For, we are fearfully and wonderfully made; and that our soul knoweth right well; knoweth, when we have put away childish things, and come to know as we ought to know. I am no philosophic egoist,—at least in the high idealistic sense,—yet I hold the world to be a very insignificant thing, and the soul an immeasurably significant one. Without confusing myself with such terms as "objective," "subjective," "*tertium quid*," and what not, I hold the thing received to be less than the thing receiving; acknowledging with Byron, that on questions so profound as the relation between ego and non-ego,—

"I don't pretend that I quite understand
My own meaning, when I would be very clear."

Have you ever thought that you can take in the world at your eye, and carry it about in your brain? Have you ever considered what a marvel and miracle it is, that "all the dread magnificence of heaven and earth" can lie insphered in *you*, can be depicted, with nicest mathematical exactness and most exquisite artistic finish, on a nerve-disc but the fraction of an inch in diameter? Have you ever *thought* about it? ever *realized* it? When you have done so, you will have some faint idea of the Psalmist's extent of meaning and significance, where he says, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

I admit the marvellousness of my make and constitution. The thing is self-evident. The Positivist will not deny it;

and the Pyrrhonist cannot. Here I *am*. Facts are stubborn things. And when physiologist, psychologist, and ontologist, having done their do upon me, and left me alone in the glory of my strange humanity, with my life-robe of many-coloured mystery around me; then it is that, freed from the din of tongues and babble of systems, and at liberty to think for myself, I ask myself that question of questions, "If a man die, shall he live *again*?" But alas! how impotent I feel myself to solve the problem. And in all simplicity and honesty, I will tell you what I do in my difficulty. I hasten for help to representative manhood, as best giving the world assurance of the genuine article. I fly to men themselves—not to their arguments. Plato may "reason well," but so does Epicurus. I find Plato himself a better reason than his reasoning. I look at the placid face, so "o'er-informed" with soul; I listen to the music of "divine philosophy" flowing from his lips; and in that sublime presence I feel my immortality. Who is he yonder, that "comes towering, clad in adamant and gold"? His coming "shines afar," and heaven and earth are lightened with his glory. The man it is who, Prometheus-like, stole one of the "sevenfold hallelujahs" from burning seraphim, and thundered it through the world. It is epic Milton, and in his wings I hear the "going" of immortality, and see reflected hues of "the rainbow that is round about the throne." I possess a fine engraving of that "theologue of the north," Thomas Chalmers. I view the massy forehead, "a span broad, I trow," and bulged out on each side with glowing idealities. I see the blue-grey eyes, oblivious of "all meaner things," struggling with infinite space, and gathering a certain mistiness in their ascent after the "mystery and magnificence" of God. I personally knew the living man; have felt the spell of his mighty eloquence; and quick reminiscence, conjuring up the *personnel* and majesty of the orator as he was when "caught in a wind of prophecy," and expatiating on some congenial theme, I write below the likeness, Can a man like this be naught but dust? "a soul of such tremendous powers"—

"Be but a breath of subtile spirits, dancing
Through their tubes awhile, and then for ever
Lost in vacant air?"

I read such books,—the vehicles of largest thought,—as "*Sartor Resartus*," "*In Memoriam*," Chalmers's "*Astronomical Discourses*," Pascal's "*Thoughts*," Taylor's "*Saturday Evening*," Thomas's "*Philosophy of Happiness*," Butler's "*Analogy*," Locke's "*Human Understanding*," et hoc genus omne; and I ask if "such thoughts" do not "breathe" of immortality, and if such "words" do not "burn" with more than gas, and point to something other than "dust to dust, ashes to ashes," as our final goal. "Come," we may, "like shadows, and so depart;" but shadow implies substance, and,—

"Trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home."

No doubt,

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy;"

but does not heaven also lie about us when we stand in the presence or read the writings of great and good men? When a Pascal stands listening to the silences of the infinite, and exclaims, "These immensities—they affright me!" is there no heaven lying about that? Or, when a Luther at Worms stands listening to the beatings of his own heart, and, compressing a lip which all the force of Christendom cannot open against its will, says: "Here I take my stand; I can no other; God help me. Amen." Is there no heaven lying about that? no stirring of divinity and immortality in that? Furthermore: Is heaven far off when the man of faith and prayer enters his "closet" to commune with his "Father, who seeth in secret"? and when he "rejoices" there, "with joy unspeakable and full of glory"? Finally: Is heaven on the other side of infinitude, and "eternal life" nowhere but in the brains of dreaming fanatics, when the good man dying feels the stirring within him of something more than "atoms," and utters his triumphant: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" For my own part, I must

confess, that when I contemplate scenes like these; that when I read such books as the above-named; and that when I stand in the living presence, or muse amid the elevating reminiscences of great and good men, I feel all within me "quite on the verge of heaven," and consider myself, philosophically as well as religiously, entitled to say: "I will praise Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;" and shall not "all die" as "the beasts that perish," but for ever live on in my individuality proper, as it behoves Thy "image" woven into my soul, and giving dignity and infinite worth to my being to do.

"Fearfully and wonderfully made." Now, *all* that God and nature does, and will do us-wards, is not, I hold, incarnated in "modern thought," comprehensive as that may be; is not named in human science; is not conceived in human imagination; and is only in part revealed in God's word, and therein for the most part only suggestively. Great old-world men have left us their "foot-prints" on, but not the solution of, "life's problems." "The burden and mystery of all this unintelligible world," is still a sphinx, waiting with stony gaze for its *Cedipus* who never comes. "I am fearfully and wonderfully made," has a fine ring with it, and this distinctive thought, that we did not *grow*; but it stops short too soon, and affords not one drop of explanation to cool our speculation-scorched philosophy. The *modus operandi* of the "making," and the how of the "make," as to the deep philosophy of its being and its working, are not so much as hinted at. Oh for one touch of Inspiration's Ithuriel spear! and what a blazing forth of truth would put our halting theories, our presumptuous scepticisms, and our daring negations to the blush! But no! "made" is all we are told. "Made;" and, not by "evolution" out of "protoplasm" and "ape;" but by a "Thee" who speaks, and it is done; who commands, and it stands fast.

"God and nature," I have said; these we associate, but do not combine, because, to use a chemical term, they are *incompatibles*. "God by means of nature," is the strictly

proper way of putting it. What the philosophy or true sense is, of "In Him we live and move and have our being," St. Paul, whose dictum it is, has not told us; not knowing it, in all probability, himself; such knowledge being too high for human mind with its present limitations to attain unto. But we are extending our line of thought, I fear, beyond the limits of the occasion. Our remaining remarks,—like the preceding ones, in fact,—must necessarily be fragmentary and merely suggestive.

It used to be a cardinal difficulty in philosophy, how substances or principles so mutually opposed as material and immaterial, could be made to inter-blend and inter-act, in the form of what are called body and soul. But we are not so metaphysical now-a-days. The "hairs" which our forefathers would have "split," we simply take up and call hairs, and there's an end to it. Matter and spirit are equally mysterious. We know not to the bottom what either of them is; and I know not that it matters much, for any practical reason, at least. I do not think that our final destination and destiny depend so much on what we are made of, as on what we make ourselves. How diverse soever the fundamental elements of our being may be, they obviously coexist at present in a state, not of union, but of unity. Body and soul constitute the man; and the man, as such, is an individual entity or personal unit. Then, if he is a unit or indivisible personality, and dies, "where is he?" I will venture to give you an idea on this point, which, whether strictly scientific or not, has considerable weight with myself. A drop of water, as water, is one. The two gases by which it is constituted are inter-blended or combined; the resultant being, a something which is neither oxygen nor hydrogen, but both, in the form of water. There it is, a fixed body or substance—"made." But forth steps "Victorious Analysis" in the form of the chemist, who says, I will make this one-thing into two things. And forthwith, by means and appliances of his scientific art the two gases burst the bonds of their unity and assume their respective primary forms of existence. The water-drop

as such is no more. I have seen this feat in analytic chemistry performed—have myself helped to do it, and that more than once, in the Laboratory of the Chemistry class-room of Edinburgh University.

Now, what is man? You say, he is matter and spirit “fearfully and wonderfully made” into a something which is neither, but both; to wit, a thinking personality—a conscious amalgam—an ego and non-ego combined, which can say “I,” and self-assert its *bonâ fide* entity in a “*cogito, ergo sum*,” I think, therefore I am. But if, inconsistently with this, you insist on calling the body a “wrapper,” I must be excused from endorsing the hypothesis. I hold that the body is not a wrapper, but a *factor*. I do not, therefore, believe that the soul is in the body as the jewel is in the casket; but that the body and the soul are *one*, just as the hydrogen and the oxygen are one in the water-drop. Well; our human unit,—too generally all unconscious of the “fearfulness and wonderfulness” of it,—“struts its little hour upon the stage,” and then? Why, then up comes “the great teacher (and chemist) Death,” and says, I will resolve this marvellous phenomenon, with its microcosmic attributes, into its two primary constituents—this concrete of matter and spirit. And forthwith the magic touch is applied; when, lo! “the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit unto God who gave it.” Thus, the body falls into the grave, and the soul rises to its “own place” and “final account.” Only in a *measure*, however; for “behold! I show you a mystery;” “the trumpet shall sound,” and “the dead” shall be again united (combined, if you will) with organized matter; which mighty event in the “progress of being” is called “the resurrection of the dead.” Whatever difficulties and differences of opinion there be on this great subject, one thing, I think, will be admitted by all who have no prepossession and prejudice in their eyes; namely, that St. Paul bases his argument for the *Ἀνάστασις*, “rising or raising up” of the dead, on the fact of Christ’s *bodily* resurrection.

"These ashes which do here remain,
A vital tincture still retain ;
A seminal form within the deeps
Of this little chaos sleeps."

(*Supposed new poem by Milton.*)

This *may* be the true theory. But would not that God's consciousness in which "all our members were written ere ever there was one of them," be a better sleeping-place than "a little chaos," till the "separate state," evanishing like a dream of the night, shall give place to the "palaces and towers" of the New Jerusalem, with all the "dread magnificence" of the "new heavens and new earth?"

"In that sleep of death what *dreams* may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil."

And in that waking from death, what realities (as opposed to idealities in dream, which are real enough while they last) may come when we have shuffled on again this mortal coil, spiritualized and immortalized "by the mighty power of God, whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself;" for "there is a spiritual body." No doubt, an original creation and a future personal restitution are equally inexplicable; but, for my own part, while fully admitting that to "our little schemes of thought," it doth not yet appear how we shall be raised again, I greatly prefer the idea of re-creation of the "personal body," and thus escape the difficulties scientifically raised by those who go the length of maintaining that the old body *can* not be reproduced. "Locke admits the possibility of all our ideas being permanent physical impressions. Experience and analogy suggest the same conclusion; and agreeably thereto, the personal body which is sown or buried shall find its counterpart in the resurrection, impressed with all the mental and bodily idiosyncrasy of [personal identity; although that counterpart itself shall be identified in a spiritual body." The matter is simply thus:—the Resurrection is revealed, but not explained; and we have neither knowledge

enough nor mind enough satisfactorily to supply the lack. To parody the words of Shakspeare,—

“Theories are easy like the wind ;
But solid truth is hard to find.”

“Fearfully and wonderfully made;” but when (at first) ? and how ? Well ; the great fact for us is, that we *are* ; the period and the mode of our advent being altogether a secondary consideration. Let us come to pictures again for a moment. I have two which I hang together by way of contrast. Some might say by way of “resemblance.” One is the likeness of Immanuel Kant, and the other is the picture of “Immanuel” Gorilla, as some do, in effect, christen the unbaptizable brute. Well ; I first look on this picture, and then on that ; but for the life of me I can perceive no family likeness between the two bipeds ; although, by our pantheistic “evolutionist” anthropologists, they are both alike *called* “Immanuel” ; the name etymologically meaning, “God with us.” I think these philosophers must have stolen a leaf from the book of the old Egyptians. For, if you had visited one of their mighty temples, and gone trembling into its adytum or holy of holies, expecting to find a Jupiter Tonans installed therein ; how disappointed would you have felt at finding, not a thundering god, but, in its stead, a contemptible lie in the form of a chattering ape ! The mountain had obviously been in labour to produce the temple—but what had been in labour to produce the god, who shall say ? None but a people who *grew* not a few of their gods could have produced a deity like this. To put a monkey in the place of God, and declare that *it* is God, how absurd ! But I will tell you what is every whit *as* absurd : to put a gorilla into the genealogical tree of man, and maintain it to be of “one blood” with Immanuel Kant. As one, however, has well said : It is not where we came from, but where we are going to, which is the great matter. If we *did* come from the monkey, let us not, at all events, go back to it, but “reach forth to the things that are before,” “looking unto Jesus,” who is greater than even the “repre-

sentative man," being nothing less than "the Lord from heaven."

I purposed to have shown how the greatest and best men are themselves poor fallen creatures, and need converting and "erecting above themselves," no less than others; but that, I must now leave.

"Marvellous are Thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well"; knoweth the fact, but not the philosophy. *How* "marvellous"! They are, indeed, like their Author, past finding out to perfection. "Nature shows us all she knows," yet how small a portion she shows us of the Infinite One.

"Come, then, expressive Silence, muse His praise."

"Marvellous are Thy works." "Where ends the mighty building?" why was it reared? how was it made? whither is it tending? and what will be the end thereof? I will conclude with a quotation:—

"Science teaches us that the crust of our earth is perpetually moving, and that the sea level is constantly changing. Our globe has its daily rotation on its axis, and its yearly revolution about the sun. The sun, with all its satellites, sweeps on towards a moving point in the constellation Hercules. Every so-called fixed star is in motion. Fifty thousand years ago, the constellation of the Great Bear, or Dipper, was a starry cross; a hundred thousand years hence, the imaginary Dipper will be upside down, and the stars which form the bowl and handle will have changed places. The misty nebulae are moving, and besides are whirling around in great spirals, some one way, and some another. Every molecule of matter in the whole universe is swinging to and fro; every particle of ether which fills space is in jelly-like vibration. Light is one kind of motion, heat another, electricity another, magnetism another, sound another. Every human sense is the result of motion; every perception, every thought, is but motion of the molecules of the brain translated by that incomprehensible thing we call

‘mind.’ The processes of growth, of existence, of decay, whether in worlds or in the minutest organisms, are but motion.” May God add His blessing ! Amen.

JABEZ COLE.

Northumberland.

“THOU SHALT NO MORE BE HAUGHTY (*Zeph. iii. 11*).—“If there be anything which makes human nature appear ridiculous to beings of superior faculties, it must be pride. They know so well the vanity of those imaginary perfections that swell the heart of man, and of those little supernumerary advantages, whether of birth, fortune, or title, which one man enjoys above another, that it must certainly very much astonish, if it does not very much divert them, when they see a mortal puffed up, and valuing himself above his neighbours on any of these accounts, at the same time that he is obnoxious to all the common calamities of the species. To set this thought in its true light, we will fancy, if you please, that yonder molehill is inhabited by reasonable creatures, and that every pismire (his shape and way of life only excepted) is endowed with human passions. How should we smile to hear one give us an account of the pedigrees, distinctions, and titles that reign among them ! You must understand he is an emmet of quality, and has better blood in his veins than any pismire in the molehill. Do not you see how sensible he is of it, how slow he marches forward, how the whole rabble of ants keep their distance ? Here you may observe one placed upon a little eminence, and looking down on a long row of labourers. He is the richest insect on this side of the hillock ; he has a walk of half a yard in length and a quarter of an inch in breadth ; he keeps a hundred menial servants, and has at least fifteen barleycorns in his granary. He is now chiding and beslaving the emmet that stands before him, and who, for all that we can discover, is as good an emmet as himself. But here comes an insect of figure ! Do not you take notice of a little white straw that he carries in his mouth ? That straw, you must understand, he would not part with for the longest track about the molehill ; did you but know what he has undergone to purchase it. See how the ants of all qualities and conditions swarm about him. Should this straw drop out of his mouth, you would see all this numerous circle of attendants follow the next that took it up, and leave the discarded insect ; or run over his back to come at his successor.”—*William Makepeace Thackeray.*

The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *THEBILIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough *HOMILETIC* treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) The *HISTORY* of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) *ANNOTATIONS* of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3) The *ARGUMENT* of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) The *HOMILETICS* of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

No. CI.

The Religious Sentiment in War.

"O GOD, THOU HAST CAST US OFF, THOU HAST SCATTERED US, THOU HAST BEEN DISPLEASED," etc.—*Psalms* lx. 1-12.

HISTORY.—The title of the Psalm contains an epitome of its history. David is spoken of as its author; and the occasion of its composition was when he strove with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah. The circumstances of this struggle are recorded in 2 Sam. viii. 3-13; 1 Chron. xviii. These chapters inform us that David made extensive conquests in the East, extending his victories over Moab, Syria, and Hamoth, subduing the country as far as the Euphrates. The expression "When Joab returned," indicates that the conquests were achieved, not by David personally, but by Joab, who was the leader of his armies,

"for Joab was over all his armies." The scene of the conquest is called "the valley of salt," which is supposed to be situated at the southern end of the Dead Sea, adjacent to the mountain of salt, whose valley separates the ancient territories of Judah and Edom. It is said that on that occasion "twelve thousand" were slain. In the history, however, contained in 2 Sam. viii., 1 Chron. xviii. the number is given as "eighteen thousand." The discrepancy is scarcely worth remark. The Psalm is dedicated to the chief musician or the precentor, and is called Shushan-eduth, which properly

means, "lily of testimony." The "lily" is an emblem of the pure and the beautiful.

ANNOTATIONS: Ver. 1, 2. — "O God, Thou hast cast us off, Thou hast scattered [margin, "broken"] us, Thou hast been displeased; O turn Thyself to us again. Thou hast made the earth to tremble; Thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh." The invaders had come upon them unawares, when their troops were engaged in a hard struggle with Aram beyond the opposite border of Israel. "Thou hast been angry." The Israelites were wont to regard all disasters as judgments from the Lord. "Thou hast made the earth to tremble." The invasion, like an earthquake, struck terror everywhere. "Heal the breaches thereof," which means, Remove the cause of disorder and repair the injury.

Ver. 3. — "Thou hast shewed thy people hard things: Thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment." Judgments, stupifying and confounding as wine intoxicate the brain (Jer. xiii. 12, 13; 1 Kings xxii. 7). As drunkenness confounds and prostrates, so the judgments of God.

Ver. 4. — "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah." "Thou hast given us, by the recent victory after our prostrate condition, a banner of triumph to lift up, because of Thy faithfulness to Thy promise." The banner is a pledge of safety and a rallying-point to those who fight under it.

Ver. 5. — "That Thy beloved may be delivered; save with Thy right hand, and hear me." Israel is represented as God's son (Exod. iv. 22), and therefore beloved. The root of the original word lies in David and Jedidiah (2 Sam. xii. 25), the name given by Nathan to Solomon.

Ver. 6. — "God hath spoken in His holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth." The promise which the Holy God made to Abraham concerning the territory of his descendants extended from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates (Gen. xv. 18). This would embrace the country of Edom, and all the countries specified in this Psalm. "Shechem" was on the west of Jordan, "Succoth," on the east. At the former Jacob abode for a time after parting with Esau, and at the latter he bought a parcel of ground (Gen. xlviii. 32).

Ver. 7, 8. — "Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver; Moab is my wash-pot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, triumph thou because of me." Gilead was the portion of Reuben and Gad, and hence associated with Manasseh. These tribes occupied the east of the Jordan, as Ephraim and Judah were the leading tribes on the west. "The strength of mine head," the helmet which protects the head, the chief military power of Israel (Gen. xlix. 22-24; Deut. xxxiii. 17). The expression evidently alludes to the prediction concerning Ephraim (Gen. xlviii. 15-22), which was strikingly fulfilled in the history of the chosen people. "My lawgiver." This is a no less evident allusion to the prophecy of Jacob concerning Judah (Gen. xlix. 10). Judah continued to be the seat of the legitimate civil authority as well as religious worship. Moab and Edom are included in the remarkable prediction of Balaam (Num. xxiv. 17, 18). And they were both subdued by David. The wash-pot is a symbol of the bondage to which conquered States were reduced.

"*Cast out my shoe.*" Casting the shoe over, is the claiming of rightful possession, as plucking it off implies yielding a right to another (Ruth iv. 7). "*Philistia.*" The Philistines were also included in the promised conquest (Exod. xxiii. 31), and were conquered by David (2 Sam. viii.). "*Cry out,*" utter the cry of the vanquished.—*Dr. Murphy.*
 Ver. 9-12.—"*Who will bring me into the strong city?*" etc. The city of strength (Psalm xxxi. 21), Petra, or Sela, the rock-built city of Idumea (2 Kings xiv. 7). "*Wilt not Thou, O God,*" because of Thy promise (ver. 6), "*which hadst cast us off? and Thou, O God, which didst not go out with our armies?*" Quoted from Psalm

lxv. 9. Faith believes the final fulfilment of the promise, in spite of contrary appearances for a time. "*Vain is the help of man.*" "*Vain,*" i.e., "*Deceptive,*" disappointing. "*Through God we shall do valiantly,*"—according to Balaam's prophecy (Num. xxiv. 18), we "*shall tread down our enemies,*"—fulfilled against Edom (2 Sam. viii. 14; Psalm xlv. 5).—*Faussett.*
 ARGUMENT.—This Psalm contains three stanzas, in which the national danger is represented (ver. 1-4), the hopes founded on God's promises are described (5-8), and their accomplishment is confidently asked (9-12). The last two stanzas are repeated in Psalm cviii. 7-13.

HOMILETICS.—THE RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT IN WAR is the subject which this Psalm strikingly and powerfully illustrates. The religious sentiment is in all men; it is the root of their moral being. In most cases it is very dormant and inoperative. Still there are but few who do not at times feel its power, and are subject to its action. Even the warrior feels it; and often it grows into a passion within him. David here speaks as a warrior, and his language reveals the workings of his religious nature. We have in this Psalm,—

I. The religious sentiment in the warrior ASCRIBING THE CALAMITIES OF DEFEAT TO GOD. "*O God, Thou hast cast us off, Thou hast scattered us, Thou hast been displeased; O turn Thyself to us again. Thou hast made the earth to tremble, Thou hast broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh. Thou hast showed Thy people hard things: Thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.*" From these verses it would seem that the battles of David brought terrible calamities upon his people and his country—calamities that made the nation shiver as if broken into pieces, shake as with the throes of an earthquake. And these, forsooth, he here ascribes to God: "*Thou hast cast off, Thou hast scattered, Thou hast made the earth tremble,*" etc.,—all THOU.

There is a sense, of course, in which all the calamities that afflict men may be said to come from God. But only in the sense of *permission*. They are not His creations, they spring not from obedience to His laws and ordinances, but break forth in consequence of their transgression. For whence come wars? Come they not from the lusts of the corrupt heart? God is not the Author of evil. Has there ever been a war whose calamities have not been ascribed to Heaven? And herein we see the awful perversion of the religious sentiment in man. We have in this Psalm,—

II. The religious sentiment in the warrior ASSUMING THE CAMPAIGN TO BE RIGHT. "Thou hast given a banner to them that feared Thee." All the advocates, abettors, leaders, and executors of modern wars have said to God in their hearts—"Thou hast given a banner." Both parties said this in the Crimean war, in the Franco-German war, in the Spanish and American civil wars. Each party professes to fight in the cause of righteousness; and ecclesiastical sycophants consecrate their banners and insult Heaven by composing prayers for their success. The *only* righteous wars are the wars that God commands, all others are moral outrages. We have in this Psalm,—

III. The religious sentiment in the warrior JUSTIFYING THE BLOODY ENTERPRISE BY REFERENCE TO SCRIPTURE. "God hath spoken in His holiness," etc. God did say this. But did He say, "Go with your battalions amongst this people, cover their fields with their dead, dye their rivers with blood, fill the air with the groans of the dying and the shrieks of the widow and the orphan"? This seems to have been assumed; and hence the warrior says, "Gilead is mine," and belongs to my dominion; "Manasseh is mine," and belongs to me; "Ephraim is the strength of mine head; Judah is my lawgiver; Moab is my wash-pot" (I treat it with contempt); "over Edom will I cast out my shoe." I possess it!

The religious spirit of the warrior often leads him to Scripture for arguments to encourage him in his infernal enterprise of rapine and slaughter. In this, wicked men

only imitate the conduct of their moral progenitor—the devil, who quotes Scripture. We have in this Psalm,—

IV. The religious sentiment in the warrior INVOKING HEAVEN FOR TRIUMPHANT ACHIEVEMENTS. “Who will bring me into the strong city? Wilt not Thou, O God,” etc. In every war in which England engages, prayers are made by its state priests, imploring Heaven to “confound its enemies,” and to “send it victorious,” after the sanguinary style of the National Anthem.

CONCLUSION.—Do not infer that a man is good, or that his enterprise is righteous, because his religious sentiment is operative. Alas, that sentiment in our nature, like every other, is terribly perverted; and the best thing, when perverted, becomes the *greatest* curse. It is no proof that a man is doing God service because he thinks he is, and implores Heaven to help him in his endeavour. The greatest crimes ever perpetrated under these heavens, have been perpetrated in the name of religion. It was the religious sentiment perverted that nailed the Son of God to the cross. *False piety* is the devil’s chief instrument, it is the tap-root of the upas, it is the main fountain from whence proceeds most of the streams of the world’s greatest crimes and miseries; it is the moral anti-christ of Christliness.

ALL CRIMES ARE PERPETRATED IN THE HEART.—What we *will*, that we morally *do*. This doctrine suggests that the world is really worse than it appears. It appears bad enough, its outward features and procedures are most repulsive to the eye of reflective virtue; but not a tithe of the heart’s dispositions does the body represent. The soul has a world of sentiment that neither tongue nor pen expresses; it is conscious of hosts of volitions that the muscles and limbs never carry into effect. We thank God that the body is too frail fully to work out the latent wishes of a depraved world. Where circumstances have been pre-eminently favourable for the play of the soul’s propensities, we have had terrible exhibitions: we have had Herods, Judases, Neros, and Napoleons, to tell us what depths of iniquity there are in the human heart.

HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF JOB.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering; but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

No. LXV.

The Speech of Elihu.—1. Controversy, Indignation, and Age.

"SO THESE THREE MEN," etc.—*Job xxxii. 1-7.*

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Job's three friends are silenced, and Job speaks no more. Elihu, a young man who seems to have heard all the discussion, now delivers himself on the whole subject; and his address extends to the close of the thirty-seventh chapter. All that we know of this Elihu is contained in this chapter. He was a young man gifted with genius of high order, and profoundly interested in questions pertaining to the character and procedure of the Almighty.

Ver. 1.—"*So these three men ceased to answer Job.*" They had said perhaps all that they had to say, and perhaps they were put a little out of temper with Job's self-vindication.

Ver. 2.—"*Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God.*" The name Elihu signifies, "Whose God is He?" His father's name is here given—Barachel the Buzite. Barachel means, "God

blesses." The names of father and son suggest that they were of pious family. The designation of the "Buzite" has been thought to indicate his relationship to Buz, one of the sons of Milcha (Gen. xxii. 21). This young man seemed to be of a somewhat choleric temper. Job's self-vindication filled him with indignation; the wrath, or anger, of Elihu was "kindled."

Ver. 3.—"*Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.*" Was it because these three friends represented Job as a fool, sinner, tryant, a sceptic, and a heretic? (chaps. v. 2; xi. 6; xxii. 5, 6; ix. 13, 14; xv. 5). Probably so.

Ver. 4, 5.—"*Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken, because they were elder than he. When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled.*" Out of respect to those who had spoken, all of whom were older than he, he had awaited.

Ver. 6.—"*And Elihu the son of*

Barachel the Buzite answered and said, I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not show you mine opinion." Though it would seem he had formed strong convictions upon the debate, his reverence for age restrained him from speech, and he all but sank into silence.

Ver. 7.—"*I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.*" "I thought days ought to speak." "It is," says an expositor, "one of our marks of vanity, when respect is not shown to the sentiments of the aged."

HOMILETICS.—What though, as some Hebrew scholars say, the speech of Elihu is not genuine, but an interpolation? What though, as Froude has remarked, his "speech adds nothing to the progress of the argument?" His words may still be regarded as suggesting and illustrating great truths of universal application. And certainly no homiletical treatment of the Book of Job would be considered complete without the remarkable deliverance of this confessedly highly gifted young man. But neither is our faith in the genuineness, relevancy, and intrinsic merits of his speech sufficiently shaken from all that we have read on the subject, to justify us in passing it over.* We have three things in these words worthy of a little attention:—*Religious controversy issuing in utter failure; indignation springing from zeal to God; and reverence for age restraining the speech of youth.*

I. RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY ISSUING IN UTTER FAILURE. Long was the controversy of Job and his three friends, hot was their spirit, and varied the arguments employed on both sides. But what was the result? Neither party was convinced. Each retained his own opinions. The disputants equipped, marshalled, and sent forth their opinions into the conflict; but though those opinions had been beaten about and often struck to the ground, the authors took them back into their tent as strong as ever. Whilst disputants seldom convince each other, they generally generate a mutual feeling of dislike and hostility. Polemics have proved the greatest hindrance and the greatest curse to the cause of truth.

* See an excellent article on the subject in Dr. Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," by Rev. F. C. Cook, M.A.

"Disagreement," says F. W. Robertson, "is refreshing when two men lovingly desire to compare their views, to find out truth. Controversy is wretched when it is an attempt to prove one another wrong. Therefore Christ would not *argue* with Pilate. Religious controversy does only harm. It destroys the humble inquiry after truth; it throws all the energies into an attempt to prove ourselves right. In that disparaging spirit no man gets at truth. 'The *meek* will He guide in judgment.' The only effective way to clear the atmosphere of religious errors, is to stir it with the breath and brighten it with the beams of divine truth. Bring out the truth, regardless of men's opinions."

We have here,—

II. INDIGNATION TOWARDS MEN SPRINGING FROM ZEAL TO GOD.

"Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled."

This young man was indignant with the disputants all round, indignant both with Job and his three friends. Why? Not because they had injured him, but because their opinions concerning God's character and procedure did not agree with his. Such indignation, alas! has always been prevalent in the religious world. Men hating their fellow-creatures because their opinions concerning God tally not with their own.

First: How *arrogant* is this! It is the regarding our own views as the infallible truth; and what is this but the spirit of Popery?

Secondly: How *impious* is this! A zeal for God which kindles indignation to men, is a *false* zeal—a zeal abhorrent to the Divine nature. Saul of Tarsus exhibited this.

Thirdly: How *inhuman* is this! Can anything be more inhuman, than to be indignant with a man simply because his opinions are not in agreement with our own? Is not this the spirit of all persecution? Has it not constructed the racks and gibbets, hollowed out the dungeons, kindled the fire and the

faggots? Has it not made those intolerant bigots of every age who—

“Prove their doctrine orthodox
By apostolic blows and knocks”?

We have here,—

III. REVERENCE FOR AGE RESTRAINING THE SPEECH OF YOUTH.

“I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not show you mine opinion. I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.” Here this young man appears in an aspect most becoming and commendable. He shows,—

First: *A sense of his theological inferiority arising from his youthhood.* He seems to have been free from that pert and self-conceited spirit so common in the young, and which is evermore forward and flippant in speech. He appeared so suspicious of his own opinions of the matters in debate, that he did not speak until all was silent. He shows,—

Secondly: *A deference for the judgment of his seniors.* “I said, Days should speak.” Age gives a man great advantage in judging things. There is no school like the school of experience—a school where the lessons are burnt into a man’s soul. “The aged,” says a modern writer, “have had an opportunity of long observation. They have conversed much with men. They have seen the results of certain courses of conduct, and they have arrived at a period of life when they can look at the reality of things, and are uninfluenced now by passion. Returning respect for the sentiments of the aged, attention to their counsels, veneration for their persons, and deference for them when they speak, would be an indication of advancement in society in modern times; and there is scarcely anything in which we have deteriorated from the simplicity of early ages, or in which we fall behind the Oriental world, so much as in the want of this.” “The eye of age,” says Longfellow, “looks meek into my heart! The voice of age echoes mournfully through it! The hoary head and palsied hand of age plead irresistibly for its sympathies. I venerate old age, and I love not the man who can look without emotion upon the sunset

of life, when the dusk of evening begins to gather over the watery eyes, and the shadows of twilight grow broader and deeper upon the understanding."

SERMONIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dorner; Lange; etc., etc.

No. LXV.

The Anti-diabolism of Christ.

"THEN ANSWERED THE JEWS, AND SAID UNTO HIM, SAY WE NOT WELL THAT THOU ART A SAMARITAN, AND HAST A DEVIL? JESUS ANSWERED, I HAVE NOT A DEVIL; BUT I HONOUR MY FATHER, AND YE DO DISHONOUR ME. AND I SEEK NOT MINE OWN GLORY: THERE IS ONE THAT SEEKETH AND JUDGEETH. VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, IF A MAN KEEP MY SAYING, HE SHALL NEVER SEE DEATH."—*John viii. 48-51.*

EXPOSITION: Ver. 48.—"*Then answered the Jews, and said unto Him, Say we not well that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?*" "The Samaritans are here regarded as unsound in faith, or heretics. And the heresy of Jesus they found in the fact that He, although a man, made Himself God (ch. x. 33). 'Thou hast a devil' or evil spirit (comp. ch. vii. 20), refers to the enthusiastic manner in which He proclaimed His delusion. Similar charges had been alleged by the ungodly against the prophets of the Old Testament. In 2 Kings ix. 11, the servants of his lord said to Jehu, when a prophet had been with him, 'Wherefore came this mad fellow to thee?' 'Every man that is mad and

maketh himself a prophet,' is the style in which a false prophet writes concerning the true."—*Hengstenberg*. Why did they call Him a Samaritan? They knew He was not a Samaritan, for they had reproached Him before as being a Galilean and a Nazarene. The reason was this: their vocabulary of abuse furnished no stronger epithet. To be a Samaritan, to them, was to be a demon, one inspired with a diabolic spirit.

Ver. 49.—"*Jesus answered, I have not a devil*" [*δαίμων*, "demon"]. "What calm dignity is here! Verily, 'when reviled He reviled not again' (1 Pet. ii. 23). Compare Paul before Festus: 'I am not mad, most noble Festus' (Acts xxvi. 25). Our Lord adds not,

'Nor am I a Samaritan,' that He might not even seem to partake of their contempt for a race that had already welcomed Him as their Christ, and begun to be blessed by Him."—*Dr. Brown*. "But I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me." Christ honours His Father by ascribing His distinguished excellences to the Divine within Him. But they dishonoured Him—Christ—by attributing all that was peculiar in Him to a diabolic source.

Ver. 50.—"And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth." Instead of "and" it should be "but" I seek, etc. He seems to intimate that He leaves His δόξα, "glory," in the hands of the Father.

Ver. 51.—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." This He had expressed many times before, not however in such a bold and naked form (ch. v. 24, etc.).

HOMILETICS.—The subject that these words suggest, is *the Anti-diabolism of Christ*.

I. CHRIST HONOURS THE FATHER; the devil does not. "I honour my Father, but ye do dishonour me." How does Christ honour the Father?

First: By a *faithful representation of the Father's character*. He was "the faithful and true witness:" the highest revelation of God in the universe. The revelation of the Infinite which the material creation gives, is very dim and limited compared with that revelation given by Jesus Christ. He was the "brightness of His Father's glory, the express image of His person." "In Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He honoured Him,—

Secondly: By *supreme devotion to the Father's will*. He came to this world in order to work out the Divine will in relation to humanity, to substitute in all human hearts truth for error, purity for pollution, benevolence for selfishness, spirituality for materialism, God for the devil. He came, in one word, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, to sweep moral evil clean out of the earth.

Now this is just what the devil does not do. On the contrary, the devil seeks to dishonour God by misrepresenting Him, dealing out calumnies into every ear that will listen to them; by opposing with might and main the Divine will. He dares Omnipotence "to arms." He is a liar from the beginning.

II. CHRIST SEEKS NOT HIS OWN GLORY; the devil does. "I

seek not mine own glory." Personal ambition and self-seeking had no place in the heart of Christ. "He made Himself of no reputation, but took on Him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," etc. Love to the Infinite Father seemed to swallow up His *ego*-ism. He was self-oblivious. Often does He say, "I seek not my own will." Had He sought His own earthly glory, He would have been the triumphant Leader of all armies, the absolute Emperor of all nations, instead of which, He was born in a stable, lived without a home, and died upon a cross.

All this is Anti-diabolic. Ambition is the inspiration of Satan. His motto is, "Better reign in hell than serve in heaven." He cares for no one else, and would kindle hells for a thousand generations in order to maintain his own dominion and gratify his own ambition. Just so far as a man loses his own *ego*-ism in love for the Infinite, He is Christ-like. Just so far as he is self-conscious and aiming at his own personal ends, he is devil-like.

III. Christ DELIVERS FROM DEATH; the devil cannot. "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." What does He mean by death here?

First: Does He mean *the dissolution of soul and body*? Not so; for all the millions that "kept His sayings" have gone down to the grave.

Secondly: Does He mean *extinction of existence*? If He does, it is in all probability true. It is morally certain, to say the least, that all genuine disciples of Christ will inherit perpetual existence. This He Himself has taught. "This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one that seeketh the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life."

Thirdly: Does He mean *the destruction of that which makes death repugnant to man's nature*? If so, the dying experience of millions demonstrates its truth. The sting of death is sin. Take sin away, and the event of the dissolution of soul and body becomes one of the brightest prospects in the pilgrimage of souls. It is a mere step over a beautiful river from a wilderness into a Canaan; it is the mere opening of the door from a

cell into palatial apartments. Now, does the devil deliver from death? No, he cannot. He *cannot* raise a dead insect to life, nor make a fading flower re-bloom; and if he could, he would not. The work of destruction is the gratification of his malignant nature. He goes about seeking whom he may devour.

CONCLUSION.—How essentially antagonistic are the inspirations of good and evil: the kingdom of the devil and the kingdom of Christ. The one is God-honouring, the other God-dishonouring; the one self-abnegating piety, the other blasphemous ambition; the one death extinction, the other death production. Kind Heaven! inspire the world with the spirit of anti-diabolism, the spirit of Christ.

The Preacher's Germs of Thought.

Notes on the Apostles' Creed.—3. "The Maker of Heaven and Earth."

"I AM THE LORD THAT MAKETH ALL THINGS; THAT STRETCHETH FORTH THE HEAVENS ALONE; THAT SPREADETH ABROAD THE EARTH BY MYSELF."—*Isaiah* xliv. 24.

BEFORE the Apostles' Creed utters its sublimely simple words about God as the Creator of all things, it has led us to say, "I believe in God the Father Almighty." Thus we have learned that Christian Belief is an individual, intelligent, filial, and practical trust in the great God, whom Christ revealed, and to whom also we are reconciled by Christ. Whoever has that Christian belief, can trust God as the Maker of heaven and earth.

That He is the Creator, is suggested by reason, even to a point of probability so high that it becomes almost proof. But it is declared in Scripture; for Genesis but gives the key-

note of the music, running through the Bible, which perpetually, though in great variety of tone, recites God's connection as Originator and as Preserver with all creation. Thus it is "by faith," not by reason, "that we understand the worlds were framed by the word of God." Such revelation of the Creator culminates in Jesus Christ. For it is He by whom the worlds were made, who Himself makes it clearest by word and by miracle how Spirit is the Fountain and the Sovereign of Matter; how God is the Source of all Causes, the Ruler through all Laws, the Life of all that lives and, above all things, how "He hateth nothing that He has made."

But our object now is, not so much to discover from the Creation the truth of the being and character of the Creator, as to see how the Christian belief in Him as Maker must influence us about the world He has made. Trust Him as the Fatherly God, who is indeed Maker of heaven and earth, and what will follow?

I. SUCH A TRUST WILL ENSURE YOUR RIGHT ATTITUDE WITH REGARD TO SCIENCE. (1) *It will free you from all alarm as to the contradictions between Science and the Scripture.* That there are now conflicts between men's opinions about Nature and her laws, which they term Science, and men's opinions about the topics of Scripture, which they term Theology, everybody knows. But the thoughtful man who remembers that Science and Theology are both progressive, never wonders at that. It is trite to say that, many of the sciences being as yet in their infancy, and Theology still continually fulfilling the great Pilgrim Father's declaration,—

"The Lord has yet more light and truth
To break forth from His word,"

have neither of them attained sufficient development to assert final dogmas on all points. When each is full grown, any controversy they might have would be very alarming. But now, while each is perpetually reaching new standpoints, their passing conflicts may be of mutual advantage and lead to

ultimate harmony. This is rather our point now, that since both Science and the Bible are two volumes from the same Author, the loving student of the second need fear no researches made by the reverent student of the first. Already many of the sciences have proved themselves the handmaids rather than the foes of Scripture; and we wait with interest, but not with anxiety, the day when the ringing hammer of the geologist shall make the rocks echo with the testimony, "The word of the Lord endureth for ever." But our Christian belief should not only take away all dread of Science, it should (2) *Inspire its earnest pursuit*. For it is the study of the work of God; a reading of His handwriting, a solution of His problems, a search into His secrets. The stars gleam with the glory of God, the flowers are fragrant with His sweetness; so that Astronomy and Botany, as well as all the Sciences, have been well called "sections of Theology." As the author's son feels towards the earnest reader of his father's book, as the artist's son towards the enthusiastic critic of his father's paintings, so we, as "the sons of God," rightly feel towards every true scientist. And to those who have leisure, or who can manfully make it, and who have capacity which they can by exercise increase, the study of God's works in the earth around and the heavens above may well be urged as a duty and a privilege—a duty which perchance we can never discharge, if not now; a privilege that at death may be one of the losses of the irreparable past.

II. SUCH A TRUST IN GOD AS THE MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH QUALIFIES YOU FOR RIGHT USE AND ENJOYMENT OF NATURE. He who believes in the Creator with all his heart will be altogether a different man in trade or travel, in manufacture of the earth's productions, search into her secrets, or enjoyment of her scenery, from the man who darkly doubts—not to say from the man who impiously denies. For such a belief excludes the Manichæan heresy, that matter is the creation of evil; and it cleanses the mind from all vestiges of that heresy, such as lead to divided worship and devil worship. It redeems men from the possibility of the folly of the ascetic

who "blushed that he had a body," and equally from the equal folly of the sensualist and the materialist, who inscribe over everything in human life, "Body reigns here." It gives to man that vision and voice about Nature that were vouchsafed to Peter when he was taught to call nothing "common or unclean." For no gift of Nature,—by which of course is meant, no gift of God,—is unworthy of man's reception or unfit for his enjoyment. He may pollute, pervert, prostitute, but he can also nobly use and sacredly enjoy.

He who has the spirit of Jesus Christ, who is reconciled by Him and taught by Him about God, will cherish Christ's spirit about Nature. Following Him in His Sabbath stroll through the cornfields, or His lonely ascents into the mountains, or His frequent walks on the sea-shore, or His wondrous retreats into the garden, such a man will read somewhat of the Divine meanings He read on the portals of the lily, or the clusters of the vine, or the leaves of the tree. Nor will it be only in what we see on the earth, but in the heavens also. For "the flower-God is also the star-God." To the Christly man Nature becomes a wonderful organ; and the opening of every stop can yield some tone of joy. Whether he gaze at the beauty of the wild flowers in the little child's hands, or at the stars, the "forget-me-nots of the angels," the loveliness of the butterfly's wing, or the glory of the forest's foliage—whether he listen to music of the bee as it hums, of the birds as they warble, of the wind as it sings among the trees and hills, or of the sea in "the everlasting thunder of the long Atlantic swell," he will feel all that beauty, all that music is the gift and revelation of "God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth;" and, overborne with emotions utterly unknown to others, he will—

"Lift to Heaven an unassuming eye,
And, joyful, say, My Father made them all."

III. SUCH A TRUST IN GOD INSPIRES WITH HOPE ABOUT THE DESTINY OF CREATION. There is much that is saddening and bewildering in some of the aspects of creation. We cannot

always see her gently breathing the spirit of quiet and restfulness with which the great, calm Wordsworth felt her to be ever "interfused." She is often stormful,—swept with hurricane, trembling with earthquake, torn with volcano. Often, indeed, her sceptre seems to us to mean the reign of life; it blossoms and buds like Aaron's rod. She is prolific, for much of her surface needs but "to be tickled with a hoe, to laugh with a harvest;" and every spring-time seems a carnival of life. Life covers even the old oak with gleaming ivy, the ruined wall with velvet moss. But there are times when the sceptre of Nature seems to mean the reign of death. The wild beasts devour each other, the hawk swoops down on the dove, the green earth is stained, the blue waves are reddened with human blood. There are graves as well as gardens. Man and surrounding Nature seem to be sharing the fortunes of a common reverse, the woes of a common catastrophe; "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain." In the midst of such reflections, a great hope glows in the heart that believes in God as "the Maker of heaven and earth." For then He is not only seen,—though that vision is gloriously true,—as a Redeemer mercifully interposing to alleviate misfortune and to restore some from ruin; but He is known to be the utterly good God, whose goodness is "over all His works," over creation as much as over redemption. In the revelation of love on Calvary we learn, "God so loved the world." That must mean, about the Unchangeable God, that He loved it as much when He formed it as through the ages in which He is watching over it and governing it; that He loved every individual man as much when He called him into being as when He preserves and redeems him. For was not the Lamb slain from the foundations of the world? This being so, we can trust Him—the Christ by Whom all things consist, for the veiled ages of the future, both the earth's and our own.

"Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change."

He is a "faithful Creator." He will care for His own;

will bring it to the destiny for which He made it. The perplexed minor of Earth's Miserere shall yet be gathered up into the swelling anthems of its joyful hallelujahs. There is a "time of the restitution of all things." Christ has gone forth "conquering and to conquer," and His victory shall at least be fuller than his whose trophy was "Paradise Lost." His greater, lasting, irrevocable triumph shall be "Paradise Regained."

IV. SUCH A TRUST IN GOD IS COMPLETELY POSSIBLE THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. Jesus has to do with Nature; with us, and with God. He is "the Door" into Nature. Moses saw one bush burning with the Divine presence: through Christ,—

"Every common bush is on fire with God."

Taught by Him and reconciled by Him, we realize that just as God comes near to us in the forgiveness of our sin, the consoling of our sorrows, the inspiring of our goodness, the regulation of our life, He also comes near to us in the light that covers Him as a garment, the earth that is His footstool, the heaven that is His throne. Connect all with Jesus, and we shall connect all with God. There is little need to dwell on the traditions that have ever linked so much of Nature with the Saviour; the lily that bowed and blushed as He passed, and has flushed with beauty ever since; the aspen-tree that shook with sympathy as the Man of Sorrows went under its shade, and that has been quivering to this hour. More spiritual, more universal than that, is Christ's connection with Nature. "The world was made by Him," "by Him all things consist," "He is over all things," "He is the brightness of God's glory, the express image of His Person." And since you can trust, with a trust that leans its whole weight on Him, that can commit everything into His keeping until that day, this Friend of the children, this Saviour of the sinful, this Brother of the sorrowful, you can surely and safely say concerning His Father and our Father, His God and our God, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth."

URIAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

Prayer.—3. The Scientific Test of Prayer.

"THE PHARISEES ALSO WITH THE SADDUCEES CAME, AND TEMPTING DESIRED HIM THAT HE WOULD SHOW THEM A SIGN FROM HEAVEN."—*Matt. xvi. 1.*

IN a broad and general manner the tendencies of religious thought in the time of our Lord were strikingly similar to the tendencies of religious thought in our own days. Then, the Pharisees with the Sadducees came, desiring that Christ would show them a sign from heaven. Now, speculative and sceptical philosophers propose to bring the efficacy of prayer to the crucial test of experiment, and thus virtually demand a sign from heaven. Let the sick persons in Ward A of a hospital be prayed for by the godly and devout, whilst those in Ward B are left merely to the ordinary appliances of medical skill. Then, in course of a suitable time, note the result. If the sick in Ward A are in greatly better plight than those in Ward B, there will be scientific fact number one in favour of prayer; if the contrary is the case, there will be fact number one against prayer. And so, I suppose, the induction is to be carried on with all the careful and accurate scientific and statistical appliances which speculative philosophers are fond of using, until at length the truth or falsity of the great law shall be attained and settled in the most approved scientific manner. *Fiat experimentum in corpore vili.* To say the least, bad for those in Ward B.

The intense grotesqueness of this suggestion is equalled by its inhumanity towards the sick and dying subjects of the experiment, and its gross violation of all true religious instinct and feeling.

Imagine a suppliant bowing before a powerful prince with the words: "Now, prince most mighty and august, I have heard it said that whatsoever thy loyal subjects ask of thee,—believing in thy power and willingness to give,—they shall receive. I do not believe that this is the law of thy kingdom; I have seen facts which seem to me to contravene it. In order to convince me of the power and force of this great law, grant me now, I beseech thee, a royal blessing on six of my neigh-

bours, and injury and harm to other six." What prince would answer a prayer so insulting and untrustful? The idea is grotesquely absurd; and, as applied to the Divine hearing and answering of prayer, becomes almost profane.

But be the test what it may, let us examine into its value. We have seen in former papers that prayer is to be regarded as one of the great moral and spiritual laws whereby God's government of His moral and intelligent creatures is carried on. This law, like all others, is liable to alteration and even counteraction from other principles of His government. Moreover, it is set forth in the only true authoritative teaching we possess on the subject, as attended by certain most important conditions, without which it must necessarily be inoperative.

In what way, then, can such a test as the one suggested prove the truth or falsity of such a law? It violates the conditions, and must therefore vitiate the result.

True and accurate scientific induction has had a glorious history. It has enabled man, to a great degree, to make the forces of nature his servants; and has throned him on the throne of physical supremacy and dominion. But even in natural things it has often fallen back baffled and powerless. And in the higher matters of moral and spiritual life, its methods are too crude and incongruous to reach satisfactory results. Such things are too wonderful for it,—it cannot attain unto them.

Moreover, such an induction as that proposed to test the truth of the law of prayer is neither true nor accurate. All natural observers are aware that experiments fail when all the conditions are not strictly observed. The presence of a very slight amount of an adverse element will vitiate the result of a chemical analysis. The wonderful phenomena of electricity and magnetism depend upon the observance of very minute conditions. These natural things cannot be so complex as the laws that govern moral and spiritual life. And yet it is proposed to test the operation of these complex laws by an experiment so crude and ill-conditioned that one would think

even the veriest tyro in science would scout it as inadmissible.

The Biblical doctrine of prayer requires that faith should go hand-in-hand with obedience, and a recognition of Christ's authority be blended with submission to God's will. Not one of these conditions is observed in the proposed experiment, which is based on doubt and built up on defiance. To expect that a telegram could be sent from England to America, when the cable was severed in the midst, would be as rational.

And if it be urged in opposition to this reasoning, that, in assuming the truth of the Biblical teaching on the subject, I have virtually assumed the very thing to be proved, I reply : Not so. The Bible represents in a certain way the law of prayer; the scientist proposes to test the truth of this law by a rough and crude experiment which violates all the necessary conditions. His experiment is entirely out of court, and can prove nothing. If the law of prayer could be arrived at by the unaided efforts of man's intellect, where the need of Divine teaching on the subject? The truth of prayer must stand or fall with the truth of Divine teaching, and is altogether beyond the reach of scientific analysis. One who rejects the Divine teaching of the Bible, will reject the truth of prayer; but no scientific experiments on prayer can ever disprove or substantiate the verity of the Bible. That must be reasoned on other grounds and by other methods.

This is not the first time that men have demanded "a sign from heaven." Such signs have been granted, as when the answering fire consumed Elijah's sacrifice. But they have been granted to the prayer of loyal trust, not to the questionings of unbelief.

Our Lord Jesus Christ invariably met such questionings by refusal and rebuke. "There shall no sign be given" (Matt. xvi. 4). "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke xvi. 31).

Indeed, the real controversy involved in such questions lies deeper. They who ask, "How can these things be?" must

be met as Christ met Nicodemus. "Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John iii. 7, 8). The mysteries of the kingdom of Christ cannot be grasped and understood until faith and regeneration have opened the eye of the human spirit.

For us, as for Nicodemus, there is a wisdom not to be found in the seats of human learning; an enlightenment which God, in His great sovereignty, sometimes hides from the wise and prudent, and reveals unto babes. It is not enough that we know the systems of earthly philosophy, that we are quite at home amidst the processes of human thought and the researches of mental analysis. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14). In God's light shall we see light.

G. DEANE, D.Sc., B.A., &c.

Spring Hill College, Birmingham.

Primitive Heroism.

"AND THEY DEPARTED FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE COUNCIL, REJOICING THAT THEY WERE COUNTED WORTHY TO SUFFER SHAME FOR HIS NAME."—*Acts* v. 41.

IN eminence, honour, and usefulness,—in the early Christian Church,—the Apostle Peter stands second only to the great Apostle of the Gentiles. At the head of the apostolic band, and present and prominent at the most important events in our Lord's public ministry, Peter exhibited exceptional capabilities, and enjoyed peculiar privileges. After the day of Pentecost he was president and speaker in the Christian Church. From his lips went forth the sentence which smote down Ananias and Sapphira; around him thronged the people bringing the sick and infirm, that his shadow, falling on them, might heal them. The people would

feel that the Apostle had power to kill and to make alive, and would consequently regard him with superstitious reverence. The people magnified Peter, and believed in the Lord. Those who occupied positions of great civil and religious authority felt their power and influence were declining; so, filled with envy and rage, they laid their rough, unholy hands upon the apostles, and put them into prison. No doubt they thought they had won a great victory, that they had silenced the *workers*, and that the *work* would not go on. They could not deny the works the apostles wrought, they were so *public* and *palpable*; but they resolved, if possible, to stop the work. They had crucified the Master, and now they would consign His disciples to a similar fate. What cowards these persecutors were, to put harmless and unarmed men into the common prison! What brave men the apostles were, to submit to be taken by such men, and to go quietly to prison! How changed for the better they were since they had been endued with power from on high; Peter would not deny his Master now! That night, an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, and brought Peter and John forth, and said, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." What a scene of consternation in the Council the next morning! The prisoners gone, yet the prison doors shut and the keepers standing without before the doors. What disappointment for error, what victory for truth! The whole Jewish Council put *hors de combat*. Hearing that Peter and John were in the temple, the Council ordered that they should be fetched to answer for these strange events, for this contempt of court. To the questions put, Peter answered with great wisdom and boldness, showing that God's commands are superior to those of men, and that they had not the shadow of a doubt about the truth they proclaimed. At the suggestion of Gamaliel, the Council let the apostles go, but not before they had scourged them, and commanded them to speak no more in the name of Jesus. After such cruel and cowardly conduct on the part of their persecutors, the apostles went forth, not hanging down their heads and weeping, but lifting up their

heads, and rejoicing that such honour was permitted them, to suffer for the name of Him they loved so much, and for Whom they were prepared to dare and, if need be, die. We have in this narrative brought before us,—

I. THE BITTER ANTAGONISM OF WICKED MEN TO THE TRUTH, AS SEEN IN THEIR DESPERATE ATTEMPTS TO ARREST ITS PROGRESS IN THE WORLD. The history of truth has ever been one of trial and conflict. He who was "*the Truth*," had to contend with the bitter and unholy antagonism of men; and the glorious company of the apostles and the noble army of martyrs show how desperate and determined have been the attempts of cruel, wicked men to arrest the course of truth as it is in Jesus. Let us see what were arrayed against the apostles, and we shall discover that similar powers have ever been against the truth.

(a) *They had social status against them.* The Founder of Christianity was of humble origin, "a root out of a dry ground." The *apostles* were poor men, of no particular ancestry. "Is not this the carpenter?" was asked concerning Jesus; and, "Are not these fishermen?" would be asked concerning the apostles. They were of the common people; and of course the high priest and the rulers among the people could not consent to be led and taught by them. So for ages, —and on the whole,—persons of social rank and great worldly wealth have not favoured Christianity, have not helped it, but rather hindered the progress of truth.

(β) *They had legal might against them.* The judges and the lawyers, who ought to have defended the weak and inoffensive, sided *against* the apostles; and for centuries, history repeated itself in this particular, and preachers of the Cross were opposed and oppressed by those who professed to defend the right and to protect the weak; and the strong arm of the law, instead of being extended to defend the truth, has drawn the sword to persecute and destroy.

(γ) *They had mental power against them.* At the Council there was the *élite* of the intelligence of the Jewish nation—men of great mental power, of great literary and oratorical ability. And from that time until now, there have been men of brilliant powers arrayed against the

truth—powers worthy of a nobler employment and worthier end. Many and mighty have been the blows struck by unsanctified and prostituted intellect at the head of the lowly Nazarene; polished, and pointed, and poisoned have been the arrows that have been shot at the army of the cross. (δ) *They had sympathy of numbers against them.* Many believed, but many more did not believe; and, although Christianity spread so rapidly in the first three centuries that Christians were found in every part of the then known world, yet many were only nominal Christians, and multitudes opposed the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. Truth has always been in the minority, so far as *numbers* are concerned. Error has usually gained the show of hands before the public. Men with high and holy purposes in their souls must expect comparative loneliness in their work. It was so with the Master, largely so with the apostles, and has been so more or less with all intellectual giants and true moral reformers. (ε) *They had antiquity against them.* They were Dissenters, Nonconformists; and the Jews would feel the utmost disdain for those who dared to dissent from their national established religion. Those who opposed the Apostles venerated Abraham and Moses; but Christ they regarded as an innovator and a sower of sedition. They felt that the apostles were turning the world upside down. Error has still pretext for pleading that antiquity is on its side; for sin is as old as Eden, older than the Law as given by Moses and the Gospel as given by Jesus Christ. *Ritualists* tell us they have antiquity on their side, and *Sacerdotalists* say they have antiquity on their side; and they gather arguments from the old economy, to justify them in throwing Christ into the background behind clumsy and lifeless rites and ceremonies. All these things were arrayed against the truth, and yet it won and worked its way. And if these things could not impede it when it was a streamlet, shall they succeed now that it is a mighty river? If alien and hardy hands could not uproot the truth when it was a newly-planted sapling, shall any hands be able to lift it now it is a deep-rooted mighty tree? God is on the side of truth, and its early victories are a *pattern* and

pledge of its *constant* and *complete* triumph over all antagonistic forces.

II. THE SUBLIME HEROISM OF HOLY MEN FOR THE TRUTH, AS SEEN IN THEIR DETERMINED LABOURS TO ACCELERATE ITS PROGRESS IN THE WORLD. Peter and John professed to be *original witnesses* of the facts connected with our Lord's life, and of the miracles He performed; and they were prepared *voluntarily* to undergo sufferings and to brave even death itself for the love they had for their Master and the faith they had in His name. What sublime heroism! second only to that of their glorious Lord. Notice: (A) *The nature of their heroism.* (a) *They could endure pain*—mental and physical pain and anguish; they went away smarting with the stripes they had received, but they rejoiced. They were not *Stoics*, but sensitive, generous men; and yet they endured pain and torture unflinchingly and uncomplainingly. (β) *They could endure shame.* Mocked and reproached and outwardly degraded, they rose superior to all; and felt that, though scoffed at and scorned, though hooted at and hissed,—treated as the off-scouring of all things,—they could bear any amount of ridicule for the *name* of the Lord Jesus. *He* had endured the cross and shame for them, and *for Him* they could endure. (γ) *They could brave dangers.* It was no use for the Council to threaten them, to warn them that heavier and severer punishments would follow. They were prepared to lose their *liberty*, and even *life*, rather than deny the name which to them was above every name. No pains would make them flinch, no penalties would make them quail, no threats could intimidate as no bribes could buy. Firm, heroic, uncompromising, they would not swerve a hair from their heart-seated resolve. At all cost and risk they would stand for the truth, and be faithful unto death. (B) *The secret of their heroism.* They were not *fanatics*, not mere *enthusiasts*; they were *calm*, *cool*, and COMMON-SENSE men. (a) *They were witnesses of the facts they attested to.* They knew they had “not followed cunningly devised fables,” they had “*seen*” and “*heard*” and “*felt*” the things they proclaimed; and the Council might as well have tried to argue them out of their own existence, as out of their

belief in the Lord Jesus. They spoke of *facts*, not of fancies or fiction; they were *sincere, honest, out-spoken* men, and had nothing in this world to gain, but all to lose, by adhering to their position before all comers. They were *examined* and *cross examined*; but nothing could shake their faith, and no one could detect a flaw in their evidence. They were heroic because they spoke and acted from intelligent belief, from satisfactory and sufficient proof. (β) *They were filled with the Holy Ghost.* Natural courage, physical pluck, would not have been enough to lead them to endure and hold out as they did to the end; they required *supernatural courage*, and they had it. They had God within them,—real enthusiasm, divine inspiration,—and so they exhibited the sublimest courage. The promised blessing had been sent to them, and they were strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. (γ) *They were inspired by a mighty name.* Oh the power of a name! Poets, patriots, warriors, etc., have been stimulated and inspired by great and illustrious names; but here is “*a name that is above every name,*” that has been more uplifting among men than any other lever name in the world; not for party purposes, not for earthly gain, not to carry out some pet scheme, did these apostles exhibit courage and resolution, but “for the name of the Lord Jesus.” There have been true successors to the apostles in this holy zeal and self-denying courage. *History is full of examples.* There are many in the present day who are bold and heroic for the truth, because they know *theoretically* and *experimentally* *Whom* they have believed, because they are filled with the Spirit, and love the name of Jesus above all other names among men. Let us not be ashamed of Christ, or He will be ashamed of us. Let us serve Him and suffer with Him, that hereafter we may reign with Him for ever.

F. W. BROWN.

Bristol.

HELL.—Men's hells are the spontaneous combustion of their own character; and the fierceness of the flames is determined by the elements on which they are fed.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

Notes on the Apostles' Creed.—2. "God, The Father Almighty."

"THE FATHER."—*John* xiv. 6.

THE idea of fatherhood is essentially the grandest and fullest conception of God, even among heathen. So the Roman had Jupiter, and the Greek Zeus as "father of gods and men;" and the Odin of the Scandinavian is a yet more parental deity. In the word "Father" is an infinity of meaning. Jesus perfectly revealed "The Father." The name was the perpetual music on His lips; the character was the light that dwelt in His life. We notice now in the very name,—

I. The truths involved about GOD HIMSELF. He must be (1) A Personal Being. (2) The Fountain of Life. (3) Perfect in goodness. Ideal parentage, in which the known is ripened and transfigured, is the truest of all human revelations of God.

II. The truths involved about GOD'S RELATIONSHIP TO MAN. (1) He *loves* men. "Like as a father pitieth," etc. Fatherliness without love, is like kingship without royalty, simply a contradiction in terms. (2) He *rules* men. Where the father has not rightly ruled his children and household, he has fallen short

both of dignity and duty. "The Lord reigneth." (3) He *educates* men. The State may help the father in some details of instruction; but the parent's inalienable right and responsibility to educate his children remains. By more ways than we can tell God educates His children. Life is but school-time, heaven is the going home. (4) He *gives* to men. The father gives "the bread," "the fish," that the child needs for food; and far more of love than even most lavish material gifts. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish," etc. If any man can truly say "I believe in God the Father Almighty," he will,—

First: Cherish a sense of God's Fatherly presence everywhere. Taught by Jesus about the sparrow and the lily, he will not lack anywhere an observatory from which to see "The Father." If he lack anything, it will be the power of sight. He will,—

Secondly: Trust in God's Fatherly providence always. As the little girl, waking in the storm with the cry "Is father on deck," slept again sweetly when she learned he was, so the true believer in the Fatherhood of God will be calm and brave. He will,—

Thirdly: Obey God's Fatherly will at all times. That was the perfect filial instinct of the Divine Man, which said "I must be about my Father's business." And He Who uttered it teaches and helps His disciples when they pray to say, "Our Father, Thy will be done." He will,—

Fourthly: Rejoice in God's Fatherly love for ever.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

Self Selling.

"YE HAVE SOLD YOURSELVES FOR NOUGHT."—Isaiah lii. 3.

THE whole world is an emporium; buying and selling are going on everywhere. Men trade in many commodities, some are legitimate articles for commerce, some are not. The text refers to the sale of *self*. In relation to this sale we offer three remarks.

I. It is the most COMMON sale in the emporium of the world. What do I mean by *self*? Not the body, not the mere bundle of intellectual faculties, but the conscience, the moral *ego*, the "inner man," that which works the faculties and which will live when the body is dust. Now, men are selling this manhood, they sell it for a variety of things (1) For *pleasure*. The voluptuary and the debauchee have sold it, and it is gone far into the mud of

sensuality. (2) For *wealth*. The worldling has sold it, and it is gone into the miserly grub. (3) For *fame*. The aspirant for worldly honours and distinctions has sold it, and it is lost in the rolling current of fashion.

II. It is the most FOOLISH sale in the emporium of the world. "Sold yourselves for nought." The man who has sold it for *pleasure*, what has he got? "Nought." What is sensual pleasure? But the pleasure of animals at best; and this wears out as animal life decays. "Desire faileth." The man who has sold it for *wealth*, what has he got? That which will soon "take wings and fly away." "What shall it profit a man?" etc. The man who has sold it for *fame*, what has he got? That which, if aromatic to-day, may be a stench to-morrow, and never at any time self-satisfying. Charles Lamb had fame, and what did he say? "I walk up and down, thinking I am happy, but knowing I am not." Dr. Johnson, the lexicographer, had fame, and what did he say? "I am afraid that some day I shall get crazy." Haslett, the immortal essayist, had fame, and what did he say? "I have been for two and a half hours going up and down Paternoster Row with a volcano in my breast." Smollett, the historian, had fame, and what did he say?

"I am sick of praise and blame. I wish to God I had such circumstances around me that I could throw my pen into oblivion."

III. It is the most UN-RIGHTEOUS sale in theemporium of the world. No man has a right to sell his soul. "All souls are mine," saith God. Sell your timber, your coal, your cotton, and you may be doing a righteous thing; but to sell your soul, you are wronging God and the universe. *Reason* says, you have no right to sell your soul; you are not self-produced nor self-sustained. *Conscience* says, you have no right to sell your soul; as you barter it away, it groans damnation at you. God made the soul to investigate His works, adore His character, and serve His will.

Philosophy and its Counterfeit.

"BEWARE LEST ANY MAN SPOIL YOU THROUGH PHILOSOPHY AND VAIN DECEIT, AFTER THE TRADITION OF MEN, AFTER THE RUDIMENTS OF THE WORLD, AND NOT AFTER CHRIST."—Col. ii. 8.

THERE are two things here worthy of notice,—

I. THE COUNTERFEIT OF A GOOD THING.

First: *The good thing.* "Philosophy." Etymologically, it means, love of wisdom; but in modern use the word stands for a system of knowledge. When applied to any

particular department of knowledge, it stands for the collection of general laws or principles under which all the subordinate phenomena of facts relating to that subject are comprehended. Philosophy, we say, is a good thing. (1) Its *spirit* is good. Its spirit is a love of truth, a desire to find out the first principles or the reason of things; a desire to penetrate all phenomena, and to enter in and study that invisible region where all the hidden forces of the universe are at work. (2) Its *process* is good—observation, comparison, generalization. Such a process is soul-quickenning, invigorating, and ennobling. (3) Its *results* are good. All the arts that bless and adorn the civilized world are but ideas reached by philosophy.

Secondly: The *counterfeit*. There is a false philosophy, a miserable imitation of the true thing. (1) A false philosophy is *deceptive*. "Vain deceit." It is mere fiction; guesses, castles in the air. Its light, such as it is, is a mere "ignis fatuus," rising out of the muddy marshes of a vain imagination. (2) A false philosophy is *ill-founded*. "After the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world." It has its origin in mere human guesses and in the rough undigested elements of mere worldly knowledge. It is built on

crudities. (3) A false philosophy is *anti-Christian*. "Not after Christ." Not after the *subject, style, or spirit* of His teaching. Notice,—

II. "The counterfeit of a good thing is DANGEROUS." "Beware lest any man spoil you," "Make a prey of you." —*Davidson*. What thousands in all ages have been made a prey of by counterfeit philosophy! They have been plundered and borne away into confusion and ruin by wrong ideas of God and the universe, of man, his nature, obligations, and destiny. "Beware" of it.

First: It has *many forms*. It appears, (1) In natural sciences, (2) In ontological theories, (3) In theological creeds, and (4) In ethical enactments. "Beware" of it.

Secondly: It has *fascinating aspects*. It often comes in the stateliness of the scholar, in the force of the reasoner, in the grandeur of the rhetorician, in the sublimity of the poet. "Beware" of it.

Thirdly: It *works insidiously*. It instils its errors quietly; and silently as the laws of nature they often work out their ends.

The Government of the World.

"HE DOETH ACCORDING TO HIS WILL IN THE ARMY OF HEAVEN, AND

AMONG THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH."—*Dan. iv. 35*.

THESE words suggest a few thoughts concerning God's government of the world.

I. God's Government is HIMSELF. "He doeth." Human Governments are not men, but systems. Men govern by institutes, or laws. Not so with God. It is true we talk of Nature, Law, Order, Providence, as if they governed us and were something apart from God; but He it is who does all. He is the essence of all forms, the spring of all movements, the force of all forces. We talk about looking through Nature to Him; but He is not only the soul of Nature, but infinitely nearer to us than what we call Nature. His constant visitation preserveth our spirits.

"He sees with equal eye, as God of all

A hero perish and a sparrow fall;
Atoms and systems into ruin
hurled;

Here a bubble burst, and here a
world."

"He causeth the sun to shine." "Hesendeth rain upon the earth." "He bringeth out the stars by number." "He toucheth the hills, and they smoke." "He kills and He makes alive." "He bringeth low and lifteth up," etc. Hence,—

First: The science that comes between us and God, is a *false* science. That is the truest science that brings

God nearest to our reason, our consciousness, our soul.

Secondly : The science that comes between us and God, is a *baneful* science. A constant conscious contact with God is essential to our spiritual life, development, perfection, and blessedness.

The words suggest,—

II. God's government is *IRRESPONSIBLE*. "He doeth according to His will." He has no one to counsel, to persuade, to restrain, or to stimulate Him. He is absolutely free. He is responsible to no being in the universe for His conduct. The fact of His irresponsibility reveals in the strongest light,—

First: The *righteousness of His procedure*. Men are often bound to do the right, not for the right's sake, but because they are answerable to higher authorities—man to man, judge to Government, king to people. But God does the right because it is agreeable to His nature.

The fact of His irresponsibility reveals in the strongest light,—

Secondly: The *benevolence of His heart*. Were He a malevolent Being, being absolutely irresponsible as He is, He would make the universe one great hell; but the whole universe overflows with happiness. How glori-

ous is God! "O come let us worship and bow down."

The words suggest,—

III. God's government is *UNIVERSAL*. "In the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth."

First: He controls all the *ordinary* as well as the *extraordinary*. Men are more disposed to see Him in the unusual and the strange, than in what is common and uniform. Men see Him in the manna, but not in the corn-fields; in the mysterious waters gushing from Horeb, but not in the genial showers that come down from heaven; they hear Him in the booming thunder, but not in the whispering breeze; they feel His touch in the forked lightning, but not in the solar floods. Albeit He is in all common objects and events.

Secondly: He controls the *spiritual* as well as the *material*.

"The army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." All moral mind, free as it is, is controlled in everything by Him, without deadening the consciousness of their freedom. They execute His behests, they flee at His command.

Thirdly: He controls the *evil* as well as the *good*.

"All good proceedeth from Him,
As sunbeams from the sun;
All evils fall before Him,
His will through all is done."

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts! and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths of the most vital interest and universal application.

Micah calls himself a Morasthite because he was a native of Morshethgath, a small town of Judea. He prophesied in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah, and his prophetic mission commenced soon after that of Isaiah. He was contemporary with him as well as with Hosea and Amos. His prophecies were directed to Samaria, the capital city of Israel, also to Jerusalem. Hence we find denunciations against Samaria mingled with prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem. One of his predictions, it seems, saved the life of Jeremiah, who would have been put to death for foretelling the destruction of the Temple, had not Micah foretold the same thing one hundred years before.

The book is commonly distributed into three sections: chaps. i. and ii., chaps. iii. to v., chaps. vi. and vii. Each of these opens with a summons to hear God's message, and then proceeds with expostulations and threatenings, which are succeeded by glorious promises.

His style is bold, fiery, and abrupt, and has not a little of the poetic grandeur of Isaiah. His sudden transitions from one subject to another often make his writings difficult to decipher.

MICAH.

No. CCXLV.

Civic Sins.

"ARE THERE YET THE TREASURES OF WICKEDNESS IN THE HOUSE OF THE WICKED, AND THE SCANT MEASURE THAT IS ABOMINABLE? SHALL I COUNT THEM PURE WITH THE WICKED BALANCES, AND WITH THE BAG OF DECEITFUL WEIGHTS? FOR THE RICH MEN THEREOF ARE FULL OF VIOLENCE, AND THE INHABITANTS THEREOF HAVE SPOKEN LIES, AND THEIR TONGUE IS DECEITFUL IN THEIR MOUTH. THEREFORE ALSO WILL I MAKE THEE SICK IN SMITING THEE, IN MAKING THEE DESOLATE BECAUSE OF THY SINS. THOU SHALT EAT, BUT NOT BE SATISFIED; AND THY CASTING DOWN SHALL BE IN THE MIDST OF THEE; AND THOU SHALT TAKE HOLD, BUT SHALT NOT DELIVER; AND THAT WHICH THOU DELIVEREST WILL I GIVE UP TO THE SWORD. THOU SHALT SOW, BUT THOU SHALT NOT REAP; THOU SHALT TREAD THE

OLIVES, BUT THOU SHALT NOT ANOINT THEE WITH OIL; AND SWEET WINE, BUT SHALT NOT DRINK WINE."—*Micah* vi. 10-15.

In these verses we have specified a sample of the crimes which abounded in the city, and which would bring on the threatened judgment. The passage leads us to make two remarks concerning *civic sins*, or the sins of a city.

I. Their VARIETY.

First: Here is *fraud*. "Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable?" "Are there still in the house of the wicked treasures of wickedness and the scanty ephah?"—*Henderson*. This sin is described in *Amos* viii. 5. "When will the new moon be gone, that we

may sell corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit?" Fraud is one of the most prevalent crimes in all cities. Perhaps in no city was it ever more prevalent than in London to-day. Our commercial immorality is that at which thoughtful men stand aghast.

Secondly: Here is *violence*. "The rich men thereof are full of violence." Strong in every age has been the tendency of rich men to oppress the lower classes by unrighteous exactions of service, by oppressive enactments. Wealth has a tendency to make men arrogant, haughty, heartless, often inhuman. The tyrant in man, as a rule, grows with the increase of his wealth.

Thirdly: Here is *falsehood*. "The inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth." Unveracity is a crime, and a crime most prevalent in all cities. There is scarcely a trade or profession carried on without deception. Fortunes are made by lies. Men are everywhere deceiving each other.

Such are samples of the crimes prevalent in Jerusalem.

The passage leads us to remark concerning civic sins,—

II. Their RETRIBUTION. All these crimes are offensive to the Ruler of the universe, and by the law of retribution bring dire results upon the population. God says, "Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances?" It is said in Ps. xviii. 26, that with the "pure God will show Himself pure; but with the froward He will

show Himself froward." And what are the results? Several are here specified.

First: *Disease*. "Therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee." Crime is inimical to physical health and strength. The diseases that prevail in cities are, in most cases, traceable to their crimes. In every sin there is a germ of physical disease, a something which tends to disturb the nerves, taint the blood, and sap the constitution.

Secondly: *Desolation*. "In making thee desolate because of thy sins." What is desolation? It is not the mere loss of property, friends, or the external means of physical enjoyment. A man may have all these and yet be desolate. It is the awful sense of loneliness, desertion. A desolate man is one who neither loves nor is loved; and sin produces this state. Few states of mind are more awful or more crushing than the sense of aloneness.

Thirdly: *Dissatisfaction*. "Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied." Of whatever a sinful man partakes, however delicious the viands, however choice and costly the provisions, he has no satisfaction of soul. He has in connection with all a hunger deep, gnawing, unappeasable. Sin and satisfaction can never coexist.

Fourthly: *Disappointment*. "Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap; thou shalt tread the olives, but thou shalt not anoint thee with oil; and sweet wine, but shalt not drink wine." A sinful soul can never get out of its labour that which it expects. He toils hard for enjoyment, but all the toils are fruitless;

enjoyment comes not. The autumn comes, and the fruits are gathered in—wheat, the olives, the sweet wine; but they do not bring him what he has struggled for—true enjoyment. He has laboured for that which satisfieth not.

Fifthly: *Destruction*. "Thy casting down shall be in the midst of thee; and thou shalt take hold, but shalt not deliver; and that which thou deliverest will I give up to the sword." Henderson's translation of this seems to me good:—"Thou shalt be inwardly depressed; thou mayest remove, but thou shalt not rescue, or what thou rescuest I will give to the sword."

CONCLUSION: Mark the law of retribution. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "Be sure your sins will find you out." Not more certain is it that the rivers follow the ocean, the planets the sun, than that suffering follows sin. Sin brings with it disease, desolation, dissatisfaction, disappointment, destruction.

No. CCXLVI.

Omri and Ahab: Lessons worth Study.

"FOR THE STATUTES OF OMRI ARE KEPT, AND ALL THE WORKS OF THE HOUSE OF AHAB, AND YE WALK IN THEIR COUNSELS; THAT I SHOULD MAKE THEE A DESOLATION, AND THE INHABITANTS THEREOF AN HISsing: THEREFORE YE SHALL BEAR THE REPROACH OF MY PEOPLE."—*Micah* vi. 16.

On the long dark roll of human infamy there are but few darker names than those of Omri and

Ahab. The former, who at first was an officer in the army of Israel (1 Kings xvi. 30), through blood and slaughter took possession of the throne of Israel, which he held polluted and disgraced for twelve long years. He built Samaria and made it the capital of the twelve tribes. Ahab was his son and his successor, and rivalled even his father in immorality and impiety. He established the worship of Baal as the national religion.

I draw three lessons from this passage,—

I. That the RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT IN MAN IS OFTEN TERRIBLY PERVERTED. Omri and Ahab were not only idolaters themselves, but established idolatry in their country. They worshipped Baal, the god that was worshipped by the Carthaginians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians and others—the god, it is supposed, who is sometimes called Moloch, to whom the Ammonites made their cruel and bloody sacrifices. To the service of this god Ahab established a numerous hierarchy of priests. The religious sentiment in man is perhaps the substratum element of his nature. Man is made to worship, and to worship the One true and living God only. But so blinded is his intellect, so debased his nature, so utterly corrupt, that, instead of worshipping the infinitely Great, he falls down before the infinitely contemptible. The perversity of the religious sentiment,—

First: *Explains the errors, crimes, and miseries of the world.* Man's strongest love is the spring of all his activi-

ties, the fountal source of all his influence. When this is directed to an idol, the whole of his life is corrupted. The perversity of the religious sentiment,—

Secondly: *Reveals man's absolute need of the Gospel.* There is nothing but the Gospel of Christ that can give this sentiment a right direction.

Another lesson I draw is,—

II. That OBEDIENCE TO HUMAN SOVEREIGNS IS SOMETIMES A GREAT CRIME. The worship of Baal was enacted by the "statutes" of Omri and enforced by the practice of Ahab. If the establishment of a religion by law can make it right, it was right that the people should worship Baal. But it was not right, it was wrong. A human law, enacted by the greatest sovereign in the world in connection with the most illustrious statesmen, if it is not in accord with the eternal principles of justice and truth, as revealed in God's word, should be repudiated, renounced, and transgressed. "Whether it is right to obey God rather than man, judge ye."

The other lesson I draw from the text is,—

III. That THE CRIMES OF EVEN TWO MEN MAY EXERT A CORRUPTING INFLUENCE UPON MILLIONS IN FUTURE GENERATIONS. The reigns of Omri and Ahab were ages before the time when Micah lived. Notwithstanding, their enactments were still obeyed, their examples were still followed, and their practices were still pursued. The wickedness of these two men was now, ages after, perpetrated by a whole nation. How great

the influence of man for good or evil! Verily, one sinner destroyeth much good. From one corrupt source may flow a stream of polluting influence that shall roll down all future times, widen and deepen in its course, and bear thousands on its bosom to crime and ruin.

"Our many deeds, the thoughts that we have thought,
They go out from us thronging every home;
And in them all is folded up a power,
That on the earth doth move them to and fro;
And mighty are the marvels they have wrought,
In hearts we know not and may never know."—*F. W. Faber.*

No. CCXLVII.

The Wail of a true Patriot over the Moral Corruption of his Country.

"WOE IS ME! FOR I AM AS WHEN THEY HAVE GATHERED THE SUMMER FRUITS, AS THE GRAPE-GLEANINGS OF THE VINTAGE: THERE IS NO CLUSTER TO EAT: MY SOUL DESIRED THE FIRST-RIPE FRUIT. THE GOOD MAN IS PERISHED OUT OF THE EARTH: AND THERE IS NONE UPRIGHT AMONG MEN: THEY ALL LIE IN WAIT FOR BLOOD; THEY HUNT EVERY MAN HIS BROTHER WITH A NET. THAT THEY MAY DO EVIL WITH BOTH HANDS EARNESTLY, THE PRINCE ASKETH, AND THE JUDGE ASKETH FOR A REWARD; AND THE GREAT MAN, HE UTTERETH HIS MISCHIEVOUS DESIRE: SO THEY WRAP IT UP. THE BEST OF THEM IS AS A BRIER: THE MOST UPRIGHT IS SHARPER THAN A THORN HEDGE: THE DAY OF THY WATCHMEN AND THY VISITATION COMETH; NOW SHALL BE THEIR PERPLEXITY. TRUST YE NOT IN A FRIEND, PUT YE NOT CONFIDENCE IN A GUIDE: KEEP THE DOORS OF THY MOUTH FROM HER

THAT LIETH IN THY BOSOM. FOR THE SON DISHONOURETH THE FATHER, THE DAUGHTER RISETH UP AGAINST HER MOTHER, THE DAUGHTER IN LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER IN LAW; A MAN'S ENEMIES ARE THE MEN OF HIS OWN HOUSE"—Micah vii. 1-6.

IN these verses the prophet bewails the moral condition of his country. The picture he draws of its wickedness is a very hideous one. It answers not only to the character of the people in the reign of Ahaz, but to their character under the reign of other kings and in other times. Take the words as presenting the wail of a true patriot over the moral corruptions of his country. "Woe is me!" etc. He means to say, It is with me as one seeking fruit after the harvest, grapes after the vintage, there is not one cluster. There are several things that he here bemoans,—

I. THE DEPARTURE OF EXCELLENCE FROM HIS COUNTRY. "The good man is perished out of the earth." Who the good men referred to here are, is not known. Do the words point especially to Hezekiah, Josiah, or to good men unknown to fame? They had however departed. Whether they had emigrated to distant lands or gone into the great eternity, is not said. The latter is the more probable idea. In any case the departure of such men is a great loss, a loss which true patriots may well bemoan. Good men are the "lights of the world." They are the "salt of the earth." Their influence penetrates the mass, counteracts its tendency to corruption, removes its moral insipidity, gives it a new spirit—a spirit pungent and savoury.

They are the conservators of the good and the peaceful reformers of the bad. "Perished out of the earth." It does not say perished out of being. They had left the land, but not the universe. They were thinking, feeling, active still. There is a sense indeed in which they could not perish out of the land. Good men leave behind them principles, ideas, a character, which will live and spread and work to the end of time.

Another thing which this patriot here bemoans is,—

II. THE RAMPANCY OF AVARICE IN HIS COUNTRY. The workings of avarice are indicated in the latter end of the second and two following verses.

First: Here we have its working amongst the *general community*. "They all lie in wait for blood: they hunt every man his brother with a net." To get wealth for themselves was with them such a furious passion, that the rights and lives of others were disregarded. Their avarice was as ravenous as the passion of a wild beast. Nay, they looked upon men only as victims for their prey. Does not this avarice work thus in English society? Man has come to value man just in proportion as he can render him service, enrich his exchequer, and advance his aggrandisement. What nets are spread out in every street, in every mart and office, in every journal, in order to catch men. "They hunt every man."

Secondly: Here we have its working amongst the *higher classes*. "That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge

asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up." The idea seems to be this: that the "great man," the "prince," for some corrupt motive, seeks the condemnation of some innocent person; and the "judge," for a bribe, gratifies his wish. A judge from avarice will pronounce an innocent man guilty. All this is done very industriously "with two hands." The business must be despatched as soon as possible, lest some event should start up to thwart them; and when it is done "they wrap it up." "So they wrap it up."* Avarice, like all sinful passions, seeks to wrap up its crimes.

Another thing which this patriot bemoans is—

III. THE MISCHIEVOUSNESS OF THE BEST IN HIS COUNTRY. "The best of them is as a brier; the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge." There is a gradation of wickedness of the men in the country, but the best of them is like a prickly thorn and worse than a thorn hedge. The prophet is so struck with this, that the thought of retribution takes hold of him, and he says, "The day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh: now shall be their visitation."

Another thing which the patriot here bemoans is,—

IV. THE LACK OF TRUTHFULNESS IN THE COUNTRY. "Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide," etc.

"Place no faith in a companion; trust not a familiar friend; from her that lieth in thy bosom guard the doors of thy mouth. For the son despiseth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, a man's enemies are the members of his own family."

—Henderson.

All social faith was gone; a man had lost all confidence in his brother. Social scepticism and suspicion prevailed in all circles. No faith was to be put in a friend. So much so that the lips were to be sealed. No confidence in the wife, no longer was she to be treated as an object of trust. No confidence in the son, the daughter, or the mother. The nearest relations were counted as enemies. "A man's enemies are the men of his own house."

CONCLUSION.—Such were the evils over which this patriotic prophet pours forth his lamentations. What right-hearted man would not bewail such a moral corruption in his country? Jeremiah said, "Oh that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night," etc. Paul said, "Would that I were accursed," etc. Christ said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" etc. It is the characteristic of a true patriot, that he feels a deeper concern for the moral state of his country than for its educational or commercial.

* See an old sermon on this text in the *Homilist*.

Salvation.

Recapitulation of the Five Theoretic Modes of Salvation.

AS GIVEN BY W. E. ALGER.*

THE first theory is this :—When, by the Fall of Adam, all men were utterly lost and doomed to hell for ever, the vicarious sufferings of Christ cancelled sin, and unconditionally purchased and saved all. This was the original development of Universalism. It sprang consistently from Augustinian grounds. It was taught by a party in the Church of the first centuries, and afterwards repeatedly condemned as a heresy by Popes and by Councils, and was revived by Kelly, Murray, and others. We are not aware that it now has any avowed disciples.

The second conception is, in substance, that God, foreseeing from eternity the Fall of Adam, and the consequent damnation of his posterity, arbitrarily elected a portion of them to salvation, leaving the rest to their fate; and the vicarious sufferings of Christ were the only possible means of carrying that decree into effect. This is the Augustinian and Calvinistic theology, and has had a very extensive prevalence among Christians. Many Church creeds still embody the doctrine; but in its original uncompromising form it is rapidly fading from belief. Even now, few persons can be found to profess it without essential modifications so qualifying it as to destroy its identity.

The third plan of delivering souls from the doom supposed to rest on them, attributes to the vicarious sufferings of Christ a conditional efficacy, depending upon personal faith. Every one who will heartily believe in the substitutional death of Christ, and trust in His atoning merits, shall thereby be saved. This was the system of Pelagius, Arminius, and

* The Editor, although he does not endorse all the views of the Author, takes this opportunity of commending his work to all discriminating students of the Bible, as one of the most interesting and instructive works extant on theology.

Luther. It prevails now, in the so-called Evangelical Churches, more generally than any other system.

The fourth received method of salvation,—assuming the same premises which the three foregoing schemes assume, viz., that through the Fall all men are eternally sentenced to hell,—declares that by Christ's vicarious sufferings power is given to the Church,—a priestly hierarchy,—to save such as confess her authority and observe her rites. All others must continue lost. This theory early began to be constructed and broached by the Fathers. It is held by the Roman Catholic Church, and by all the consistent portion of the Episcopalian. A part of the Baptist denomination also, through their popular preachers, if not in their recognized symbols, assert the indispensableness of ritual baptism to salvation.

The fifth view of the problem is, that no soul is lost or doomed except so far as it is personally voluntarily depraved and sinful. And even to that extent and in that sense it can be called lost only in the present life. Death emancipates every soul from every vestige of evil, and ushers it at once into heaven. This is the distinctive doctrine of some modern Universalists. It is disappearing amongst its recent earnest advocates, who as a body will, undoubtedly, exchange its arbitrary conceptions for more rational conclusions.

The sixth and final scheme of Christian salvation teaches that, by the immutable laws which the Creator has established in and over His works and creatures, a free soul may choose good or evil, truth or falsehood, love or hate, beneficence or iniquity. Just so far, and just so long as it partakes of the former, it is saved; as it partakes of the latter it is lost, that is, alienates the favour of God, forfeits so much of the benefits of creation and of the blessing of being. The conditions and means of repentance, reformation, and regeneration are always within its power, the future state being but the unencumbered, intensified experience of the spiritual elements of the present, under the same Divine constitution and laws. This is the belief of the Unitarians, Restorationists, and the general body of believers known as "liberal Christians."

Salvation by purchase, by the redeeming blood of Christ; salvation by election, by the independent decree of God, sealed by the blood of Christ; salvation by faith, by an appropriating faith in the blood of Christ; salvation by the Church, by the sacraments made efficacious to that end by the blood of Christ; salvation by nature, by the irresistible workings of the natural order of things declared by the teachings of Christ; salvation by a resurrection from the dead miraculously effected by the delegated power of Christ; salvation by character, by conformity of character to the spiritual laws of the universe, to the nature and will of God, revealed, urged, exemplified by the whole mission of Christ—these are the different theories proposed for the acceptance of Christians.

Outside of Christendom we discern, received and operative in various forms, all the theoretic modes of salvation acknowledged within it, and some others in addition. The creed and the practice of the Mohammedans afford a more unflinching embodiment of the conception of salvation by election than is furnished anywhere else. Islam denotes fate. All is predestinated, and follows on in inevitable sequence. No modifying influence is possible. Can a breath move Mount Kâf? The chosen of Allah shall believe; the rejected of Allah shall deny. Every believer's bower is blooming for him in Paradise. Every unbeliever's bed is burning for him in hell. And nothing whatever can avail to change the persons or the total number elected for each.

There is one theory of salvation scarcely heard of in the West, but extensively held in the East. The Brahminic and the Buddhist thinker relies on obtaining salvation by knowledge. Life in a continual succession of bodies is his prediction. His salvation is to be freed from the vortex of births and deaths, the fret and storm of finite existence. Neither goodness nor piety can ever release him; knowledge alone can do it. An unsullied intellectual vision and a free intellectual grasp of truth and love can alone rescue him from the turbid sea of forms and struggles. As a lump

of salt is of uniform taste within and without, so the soul is nothing but intelligence. If the soul be an entire mass of intelligence, a current of ideas, its real salvation depends on its becoming pure and eternal truth, without mixture of falsehood or of emotional disturbance. He must free himself from virtues as well as from sins; for the confinement of fetters is the same, whether the chains be of gold or of iron. Accordingly, the Hindu, to secure emancipation, planes down the mountainous thoughts and passions of his soul to a desert level of indifferent insight. And when, in direct personal knowledge, free from joy and sorrow, free from good and ill, he gazes into the limitless abyss of Divine truth, then he is sure of the bosom of Brahm, the door of Nirwana. Then the wheel of the Brahmanic Ixion ceases revolving, and the Buddhist Ahasuerus flings away his staff, for salvation is attained.

The conception of salvation by ritual works based on faith,—either faith in Deity or in some redemptive agency,—is exhibited all over the world. Hani, a Hindu devotee, dwelt in a thicket, and repeated the name of Krishna a hundred thousand times each day, and thus saved his soul. The saintly Muni Shukada said, as it is written in the most popular religious authority of India, “Who even ignorantly sings the praises of Krishna undoubtedly obtains final beatitude.” The repetition of the names of Vishnu purifies from all sins, even when invoked by an evil-minded person, as fire burns even him who approaches it unwillingly. Nothing is more common in the sacred writings of the Hindus than the promise that “whoever reads or hears this narrative with a devout mind shall receive final beatitude.” Millions on millions of these docile and abject devotees, undoubtedly expect salvation by such merely ritual observances. One cries, “Lord!” “Lord!” Another thumbs a book, as if it were an omnipotent amulet. Another meditates on some mystic theme, as if musing were a resistless spell of silent exorcism and invocation. Another pierces himself with a red-hot iron, as if voluntary pain endured now could accumulate merit for him and buy off future inflictions.

It is surprising to what an extent men's efforts for salvation seem underlaid by conceptions of propitiation, the placation of a hatred, the awakening of a love, in the objects of their worship. In all these cases salvation is sought indirectly through works, though not particularly good works. The savage makes an offering, mutters a prayer, or fiercely wounds his body before the hideous idol of his choice. The Fakir, swung upon sharp hooks, revolves slowly round a fire. The monk wears a hair shirt, and flagellates himself until blood trickles across the floor of his cell. The Portuguese sailor, in a storm, takes a leaden saint from his bosom and kneels before it for safety. The offending Bushman crawls in the dust and shudders as he seeks to avert the fury of the fetish which he has carved and set in a tree. The wounded brigand in the Apennines, with unnumbered robberies and murders on his soul, finds perfect ease to his conscience as his glazing eye falls on a carefully treasured picture of the Virgin; and he expires in a triumph of faith, saying, "Sweet mother of God, intercede for me!" The Calvinistic convert about to be executed for his fearful crimes, kneels at the foot of the gallows and exclaims, as in a recent well-known instance,— "I hold the blood of Christ between my soul and the flaming face of God, and die happy, assured that I am going to heaven."

It is all a terrible delusion, arising from a perverted sentiment and degraded thought. Of the five theoretical modes of salvation taught in the world,—Election, Faith, Works, Knowledge, Harmony,—one alone is real and divine, although it contains principles taken from all the rest and blended with its own.

There is no salvation by foregone *election*; for that would dethrone the moral laws and deify caprice. There is no salvation by dogmatic *faith*; because faith is not a matter of will, but of evidence, not within man's own power; and a thousand varieties of faith are necessitated among men. There is no salvation by determinate *works*; for works are measurable quantities whose rewards and punishments are

meted and finally spent; but salvation is qualitative and infinite. There is no salvation by intellectual *knowledge*; for knowledge is sight, not being; an accident, not an essence; an attribute of one faculty, not a right state and ruling force in all. The true salvation is by *harmony*; for harmony of all the forces of the soul with themselves and with all related forces beyond, harmony of the individual will with the Divine will, harmony of personal action with the universal activity—what other negation of perdition is possible? What other definition and affirmation of salvation conceivable? By the Creator's fiat, man is first elected to be. By the guiding stimulus of faith he is next animated to spiritual exertion. By the performance of good works he then brings his moral nature into a beautiful form and attitude. By knowledge of truth he furthermore sees how to direct, govern, and attune himself. And finally, by the accomplishment of all this in the organized harmony of a wise and holy soul, there results the state of being whose passive conditions constitute salvation, and whose active experience is eternal life.

The Preacher's Emblematory Helps.

ANCIENT MYTHS: THEIR MORAL MEANINGS.

Books of Reference: Max Müller's "Lectures on Comparative Mythology." Hardy's "Manual of Buddhism." Pritchard's "Analysis of Egyptian Mythology." Coxe's "Mythology of the Aryan Nations." Coxe's "Tales of Ancient Greece." Gladstone's "Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age." Farrar's "Critical History of Free Thought." Keary's "Heroes of Asgard." Canon Kingsley's "Sermons." Ruskin's "Queen of the Air." Sir T. Malory's "Morte d'Arthur." "Bacon's Essays." "Murray's Manual of Mythology."

"Shall we sneer and laugh at all these dreams as mere follies of the heathen? If we do so, we shall not show the spirit of God or the mind of Christ, nor shall we show our knowledge of the Bible."—Canon Kingsley.

No. VIII.

Nemesis: or, Retribution.

THIS goddess was the child of Ocean and Night; that is, "the fluctuating change of things, and the obscure and secret di-

vine decrees," Ocean being the best symbol of endless change, and Night of inscrutable mystery. Nemesis was represented as a thoughtful figure of queenly mien, crowned, winged, driving a car drawn by griffins. Her

emblems are, a wheel, to indicate the speed of her punishments; a javelin, to indicate the fierceness of her stroke; a bridle, a yoke, a rudder, and an apple branch. She rides upon a stag, a very long-lived creature, suggesting that she can overtake, and so overcome all. As goddess of punishment, an image of her was placed beside the bench of the judges. Thus she appeared to the Roman mind; but the Greek conception of her, while in harmony with this, was less concrete and more purely spiritual. To them, Nemesis was a profound principle, a pervading law, scarcely to be figured in a single person. As such, she was "the ruling notion in Greek tragedy. A profound sense of the Divine government of the world, of a righteous power punishing pride and vice, pursuing the children of the guilty to the tenth generation, but showing mercy to the contrite,—in short, a mysterious and almost Jewish ideal of offended holiness,—pervades the whole work of the tragedians." The stealing of Helen and the obstinacy of the Trojan princes are avenged by the fall of their city. The same power works the death of the suitors of Penelope, because of their insolence. It was so with the drowning of the Achaian heroes for their impiety and pride during the sack of Troy. Thus also Ajax is visited with madness because of his treatment of Cassandra. In the Persian war, "the idea of Nemesis quelling the insolent, and smiting the unholy was realized in actual history; and to add to the impression produced on Greek imagination, Phidias carved his

statue of Nemesis, to be a monument in enduring marble of the national morality. Æschylus erected an even more majestic monument to the same principle in his tragedies." We find the law of Nemesis illustrated as abstract and ideal in the "Prometheus," as actualized and humanized in the "Oresteia," and as a fact of every-day history in the "Persae." Indeed, the pedigree of crime and punishment, individual and inherited, is traced perpetually in the Greek poets.

The great error in the whole myth, is that which attributes to Nemesis, not merely the mission of avenging evil, but of so striking the balances in human life, that none should be quite prosperous or entirely happy. It was a strange fancy, that the gods would be jealous of such an one as had no adversity; and so this goddess herself, or some of her emissaries, mainly the awful Erinnys, were sent to repay even innocent happiness with some calamity. Notwithstanding this, great truths about retribution are illustrated by the mission and character of Nemesis.

I. THAT RETRIBUTION IS CONNECTED WITH MYSTERY. This is sufficiently figured by Ocean and Night. And the fact is realized (1) In the vicissitudes of life, by which sins are punished. The ebb of health, or honour, or wealth, or peace of mind strangely follows their flow. (2) In the inexplicableness of life. Often the changes and chances mean punishment, but often they do not. Whilst Night covers the landscape, who can map it? And whilst so much of the Divine purpose

is secret and hidden from us, it behoves us to remember that the men upon whom the tower of Siloam fell were not sinners above the rest, and that the blindness of a man is no proof of his own or of his parents' sin. Hence there is mystery. "Clouds and darkness are round about Him," yet "righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne."

II. THAT RETRIBUTION WORKS MIGHTILY. The Roman thought, of the javelin and the wheel and the stag that Nemesis employed, and the Greek thought, of the awful goddesses she sent, or, better still, of the far-reaching inviolable law, are alike vivid pictures of the great power there is on the side of righteousness and justice. All the laws of nature, the course of history, the constitution of man, but express the Divine energy, which will at last be seen to be omnipotent against sin. "He shall break them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

III. THAT RETRIBUTION IS MOST COMPREHENSIVE. The domain of Nemesis is not simply Greek, but extended to Persia as well; not only there, for it was Roman also. Moreover, it was not for one sin, or one class of sin, that penalties were waiting. So biographies have shown, from Cain's to Judas's. And so every part of each individual life will testify; for the old man cries, "Thou mak-

est me to possess the sins of my youth."

IV. THAT RETRIBUTION IS INEVITABLE. If not with her swift wheel, at least by patient pursuit on her long-lived stag, Nemesis ensured the punishment, sooner or later, somehow, somewhere, or somewhen, of all her victims. Penalty as surely follows sin as the shadow the substance, if but the light of Nemesis be there. Thus is it with Divine retribution, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

"Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;

Though with patience, He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all."

The idea cannot be better put than in Canon Kingsley's words.

"We must fix it very clearly in our minds, that sins may be punished in this life, even though he who commits them is not aware that they are sins. Every sin, whether conscious or unconscious, must avenge itself by the Divine laws of the universe, whether physical or spiritual. No miracle is needed, no interference of God with His own laws, His laws are far too well made for Him to need to break them a second time because a sinner has broken them already. They avenge themselves."

URIAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

IDEAS.—Better be without food for the body than without ideas for the mind. Great ideas are the pinions of the soul: by them we soar with eagle swiftness from the earth, cleave the clouds, and bask high up in the bright day-beams of truth.

SCIENTIFIC FACTS AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

"Books of Illustration" designed to help preachers, are somewhat, we think, too abounding. They are often made up to a great extent of anecdotes from the sentimental side of life, and not always having a healthful influence or historic foundation. We find that preachers and hearers are getting tired of such. Albeit illustrations are needed by every speaker who would interest the people, and are sanctioned by the highest authority. Nature itself is a parable. Hence we have arranged with a naturalist who has been engaged in scientific investigation for many years, to supply the *Homilist* with such reliable and well-ascertained facts in nature as cultured and conscientious men may use with confidence, as mirrors of morals and diagrams of doctrines.

The Vulture: Precedence.

In our table of precedence we do not always allot the highest place to the best or the strongest. We are guided by certain arbitrary rules, and we evince our awe for one of two classes, and our preference for it over the others on principles which are not altogether intelligible. At the same time we are not singular in this. The vultures do likewise.

The Pondicherry Vulture (*Otogyphes calvus*) is an Indian species greatly resembling the Bengal Vulture in its habits. It belongs, however, to a different genus, distinguished by having the head and neck quite bare of feathers, and by the skin of the former being curiously folded about the aperture of the ear. Although the Pondicherry Vulture and the Bengal Vulture are nearly of the same size, the former appears to have the power of inspiring some kind of respect in his brother scavenger; for whenever he descends upon a carcass on which a crowd of Bengal Vultures are feeding, they immediately make way for him, and even retire from the banquet until he is satisfied—a proceeding which has obtained for the species the unearned title of the King Vulture

both from Europeans and natives.

The Eskimos: The Improvident Life.

THE Eskimos inhabit the immense icy plains which extend into America, even beyond the Polar circle. During the winter they often fast several days at a time, and remain immured in their huts, like hibernating animals; but, at length, driven by famine and by want of oil, they go forth upon the ice in search of the seals when they come up to breathe. When they have killed one, they regale themselves upon it until only the bones remain, after which they endure a new period of privation. Thus they live from day to day, in continual alternations of gluttony and abstinence.

All idea of providing for the future is as entirely out of their heads as it is out of many of those in our own land who have had greater advantages and more opportunities of knowing right.

The Caracaras: Subsisting on Offensiveness.

THERE are men whose livelihood is obtained by performing acts which, even if they were

necessary, are simply offensive to think of. The pettifogging lawyer, the swindling accountant, the dishonest beggar, are of this tribe. Their food is obtained from sources which clean creatures could not touch; and they do not scruple to rob even those who are of their own horrible nature. They are in one respect worse than the Caracara of South America, for in gratifying its own appetite for snakes it does not injure mankind. But they resemble it in the versatility of their depraved taste. For it does not confine itself to this diet, but feeds indifferently upon carrion, insects, and mollusca, and also,

like many vultures, attacks quite new-born lambs. According to some writers, the Caracaras, like those men, are not above taking their prey at second-hand; they are said to watch for one of the vultures returning from his repast of carrion, when they fly out upon him and pursue him until he finds it necessary to disgorge his food; upon which the conspirators immediately descend, like a number of schemers and rogues, whose disgusting taste for offensiveness, and capacity to enjoy all sorts of prey, has stimulated them to the successful plunder of some one who is less wary than themselves.

BIBLICAL ANECDOTES AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

No. VI.

Moses Smiting the Rock in a Wrong Spirit.

WE are told in Numbers xx. 10-13 that when the people were at the wilderness of Zin they murmured for want of water. Moses and Aaron betook themselves to God and implored His interference. They received a command to speak to the rock, and were assured that upon their doing so a copious supply of water would rush out. Moses, having smitten the rock twice, in a presumptuous spirit, received the Divine intimation that he should not be allowed to conduct the people through the wilderness. Moses sins. What was his sin? There was disobedience. He was commanded to speak to the rock

and he spoke to the people. And he speaks to the people with irreverence and revenge. "Must we," not Must the Lord, but, "Must we fetch you water from this rock?" He had, it is true, been sorely tried by these people, and that on many occasions. Now his temper had reached a crisis. In this strange anecdote we have three things presented to us:—

I. A GOOD MAN LOSING HIS TEMPER. Moses was a good man, and represented as very meek in spirit. But here his temper for the moment gave way, it broke into irreverence, presumption, vengeance. The best of men are liable to a burst of passion. David, Asaph, John, Paul. All at different times seemed to lose their temper. Christ in this respect stands in

sublime contrast to all. He never lost self-command, He never gave away to passion, He was reviled, yet He reviled not again. Another thing presented here is,—

II. A USEFUL WORK DONE IN A BAD SPIRIT. To bring water out of the rock was a useful work. It was the life of all the tribes for forty years. But Moses did this work in a wrong spirit. Men are constantly doing useful things in a bad spirit. Churches are sometimes built in spite, charitable contributions made from vanity, sermons preached from wrong inspiration. "Some indeed," says Paul, "preach Christ even of envy and strife." Another thing here presented is,—

III. A HOPE OF YEARS BLASTED BY ONE ACT. For forty years Moses had cherished the hope of entering and enjoying the promised land. But the Lord

says, "Thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel" (Deut. xxxii. 52). And again He says, "Ye rebelled against my commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify me at the water before their eyes," etc. (Num. xxvii. 14). Because of this sin, this one act, his whole hope was quenched, he died on Pisgah with the full view of the promised land outspread before him. How often this happens! One wrong act blights an old hope, shatters an old purpose. Hopes are the stars of the mind. In young life those stars are very numerous and bright; but with every sinful act one after another is quenched, until the whole firmament of the soul is in starless gloom.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

Christianity.

EMBODIED Christianity is the great desideratum; but it is, confessedly, a rare thing amongst us. Barren creeds, conventional formalities, and zeal far more denominational than Divine, make up, to a great extent, the Christianity of this age. The Christianity which the Church is holding out to the world in these days is something like thunder without flesh or blood—a mere hide stuffed with bones!—dry bones! The salt has lost its savour; our religion has become tasteless. It has no pungent spirit-

edness. To induce people to contribute to the spread of the Gospel, missionary platforms often quote the good old aphorism, "Great is the truth, and it will prevail." But we are only deceiving ourselves, and others too, if we do not remember another aphorism equally true and profound; viz., that moral truth can only prevail over moral error by meeting it in its own form. If the errors of the world existed only in abstract theories and fine speeches, then your truth, by abstract arguments and eloquent harangues, could put it down. But errors

are *concrete* things; they are not merely in the brain, on the tongue, or in the folio, but they are in the life—they are embodied. Your infidelity, your paganism, your irreligious and wrong relations, are all incarnations; they are realities in men, wrought into the very texture of their experience. If, therefore, your truth is ever to prevail over those errors, its word must become flesh and dwell amongst them. Let the Church's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth, and then its light shall so shine before men that others will see its good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven.

Murder.

"THOU shalt not kill." The commandment does not say, "Thou shalt not kill *privately*," from any personal feeling, leaving room for the inference that man may kill in his official capacity, and from public considerations. The language meets man as man in every capacity and position; it meets him as the judge upon the bench, as the executioner upon the scaffold, as the soldier upon the field. With this passage before us, we are bound to regard intentional killing, by whomsoever effected, however effected, and wherever effected, as a violation of God's eternal law.

Profanity.

THIS is a mighty evil. If the soul has not reverence, what has it? It has no depth of feeling, no balance of faculties, no true

idea of life, no substratum of goodness. It has no virility. It is volatile and weak. It has no sympathetic connection with the great Fountain of energy and peace. It moves through life, not like the imperial bird in the atmosphere, pursuing its aerial path, however the winds may blow, and soaring onward through massive clouds may roll between; but, like the loose feather, it is the sport of every wind; it gyrates, but cannot fly.

Mysteries.

"We wait for light, but behold obscurity."—*Isa.* lix. 9.

"WORLD of uncertainty—
Region of change—
Over thy mountain heights
Blindfold we range,
Knowing not, seeing not,
Whither we go;
World of uncertainty,
Mystery thou!

"World of the starry hosts,
Mystery thou!
Shining in order
We know not how;
Linked to the new-born,
Linked to the sod,
Chanting in vespers,
'Praise to our God.'

"World of the floral band,
Mystery thou!
Budding and blooming
We know not how;
Linked to the sun-ray,
Linked to the sod,
Whispering winningly,
'Rooted in God.'

"World of the stony beds,
Mystery thou!
Growing so lifelessly
We know not how;

Down in the depths of earth
Rolling in seas;
Forming your ridges
As Deity please.

“World of the Spirit land,
Mystery thou!
Breathing your messages,
We know not how;
Watching our lives unseen,
Marking our tears,

Knowing our anguish,
Weighing our fears,

“Bidding us look
From the dark and unknown
Into the light
Of your ether home.
We look, but we see not;
The mists cloud our view.
World of immensity,
Mystery thou!”

S. P. ATKINSON.

Homiletical Breviaries.

No. CCXLVI.

Soul Liberty.

“BUT NEITHER TITUS, WHO WAS WITH ME, BEING A GREEK, WAS COMPELLED TO BE CIRCUMCISED: AND THAT BECAUSE OF FALSE BRETHREN UNAWARES BROUGHT IN, WHO CAME IN PRIVILY TO SPY OUT OUR LIBERTY WHICH WE HAVE IN CHRIST JESUS, THAT THEY MIGHT BRING US INTO BONDAGE: TO WHOM WE GAVE PLACE BY SUBJECTION, NO, NOT FOR AN HOUR; THAT THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL MIGHT CONTINUE WITH YOU.”
—*Gal. ii. 3-5.*

WHY did Paul circumcise Timothy, and insist that Titus should not be circumcised? Undoubtedly, to show that Christianity is independent of all ceremonies, that it can exist with them and without them. The text suggests three thoughts concerning soul liberty. I. IT IS ESSENTIALLY IDENTIFIED WITH CHRIST. “Our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus.” There is liberty of soul, and nowhere else.* II. IT IS OPPOSED BY A RITUALISTIC MINISTRY. “And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy.” The false brethren insisted on circumcision. Ritualism is dead against soul liberty. III. IT IS TO BE DEFENDED WITH UNCOMPROMISING DETERMINATION. “To whom we gave place by subjection, *no, not for an hour.*” “To whom not even for an hour did we yield by the required subjection.”—*Davidson.*

Brothers: To all who would invite you into their ritualistic ordinances, give the emphatic NO!

* See Page 45.

No. CCXLVII.

The Christly Character.

"AS YE HAVE THEREFORE RECEIVED CHRIST JESUS THE LORD, SO WALK YE IN HIM."—Col. ii. 6.

In this statement of fact Paul's argument culminates. He appeals to their experience. They had received the doctrine of Christ from Epaphras, and He Himself had entered their hearts. The text suggests the origin and progress of a Christly character. I. Its ORIGIN. "Received Christ." What is it to receive Christ? To accept Him, First: As the supreme Object of the soul's love. Secondly: As the imperial Guide of the soul's activities. Thirdly: As the only Physician of the soul's diseases. This is the reception—not merely the reception of His doctrines into the intellect, but the reception of Himself into the heart, as the moral Monarch of its loves and activities. II. Its PROGRESS. "Walk ye in Him." This implies, First: *A most vital connection with Him.* "In Him." In His ideas, spirit, aims, character. This implies, Secondly: *A possibility of walking out of Him.* Peter did so. Man's liberty as a responsible being and the word of God show this possibility. It implies, Thirdly: *A real personal exertion.* "Walk." No one can walk for us.

No. CCXLVIII.

The Best Social Wish.

"THIS ALSO WE WISH, EVEN YOUR PERFECTION."—2 Cor. xiii. 9.

THERE are many social wishes. Some wish their friends wealth, strength, influence, long life, great enjoyment, etc. But the wish of Paul comprehends them all, transcends them all; it is perfection. Perfection means, completeness of Christian character. The image seems to be drawn from a structure where all the parts are exactly adjusted, so as to make it complete and perfect of its kind. He wished their moral perfection. This is the best wish for two reasons. I. It INVOLVES ALL GOOD. The man who is morally perfect has, First: The highest inner *satisfaction*. A good man is satisfied in himself. Secondly: The highest *companionship*. The pure in heart see God. "Our fellowship is indeed with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." Thirdly: The highest *authority*. He is the lord over himself; he has won a dominion over his own nature. Fourthly: The highest *inheritance*. All things are his. This is the best wish because,—II. It

is the MOST PRACTICAL. Moral perfection is a wish that all may realize. All may not be able to realize health, riches, influence, long life, etc. But all may get moral perfection; all have the idea of it, and all have the strongest motives to struggle after it.

No. CCXLIX.

Judas given to Christ.

"WHILE I WAS WITH THEM IN THE WORLD, I KEPT THEM IN THY NAME: THOSE THAT THOU GAVEST ME I HAVE KEPT, AND NONE OF THEM IS LOST, BUT THE SON OF PERDITION; THAT THE SCRIPTURE MIGHT BE FULFILLED."
—*John xvii. 12.*

OBSERVE,—I. That in the Church of Christ, THERE ARE BAD AS WELL AS GOOD MEN. Judas was with the disciples. In the field there are tares as well as wheat; in the fold, goats as well as sheep; in the net, the unclean as well as the clean. II. In the Church of Christ, the bad as WELL as the good are GIVEN TO CHRIST. "Those that Thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition." (1) Bad men as well as good are the *property* of God. He can give them. "All souls are His." (2) Bad men as well as good are under the *direction* of God. Judas did not go into the assembly by accident. He was directed there by God. (3) Bad men as well as good are *employed* in the service of God. Judas did a very useful work, but no thanks to him. III. In the Church of Christ the bad are DESTINED TO BE RUINED. Judas perished. He went to his own place. It is better for a man to fall from the level sands than from the lofty cliff; it is better for a soul to fall into ruin from the corrupt world, than from the height of Christian privilege and profession.

No. CCL.

Christ's Condemnation of the Sword.

(A SERMON FOR THREATENED EUROPEAN WAR.)

"PUT UP AGAIN THY SWORD INTO HIS PLACE: FOR ALL THEY THAT TAKE THE SWORD SHALL PERISH WITH THE SWORD."—*Matt. xxvi. 52.*

It is strange that nearly 2000 years after these words were uttered the shadow of a great war should be impending over Christendom; and that even England should seem, as in the blundering and wicked war of 1854, to be so concerned as to have her hand on the sword's hilt. It is well to remember I. THE EVILS OF WAR ARE THE VERY EVILS CHRIST CAME TO REMOVE. What are they? (1) Reign


of brute force. (2) Carelessness about cruelty. (3) Neglect of the interests of individual souls. (4) Stubborn hindrance of progress and brotherhood. (5) Setting up wrong standards of character. Such as Roman honour of Mars and Hercules, and Scandinavian honour of Thor, rather than Christian honour of the Christ. The Beatitudes are reversed, and glamour is thrown around soldiery. II. THE ADVANTAGES OF WAR ARE ONLY APPARENT GAINS. (1) War leads to war. The seeds of revenge are sown in the scars of the conquered. (2) There has to be recourse to arbitration at the end, as there might have been at the beginning. (3) If there is acquiescence in victory, it is a wicked confession that Providence is on the side of the strongest battalions.

Bristol.

URIJAH B. THOMAS.

My Ministry at Stockwell.

(Continued from page 74.)

HE first result of this letter was a general respect for my independency. Although the spirit was somewhat unpalatable to some of the would-be diaconal lords, and a little grating to the feelings of those who had come to regard Dissenting ministers as the servants of the people,—sometimes to be ordered, and sometimes to be compassionated and petted,—yet all in their hearts respected the honesty and manliness of the Epistle. Henceforth, to the end of my ministry, no officer of the Church ever treated me as my employer or paymaster, but all as friends and colleagues. Nor did the wealthy members of the Church expect that pastoral toadyism which is often so agreeable to their nature, so essential to their patronage, and, alas! so rife in many pastorates. And the poor expected from me what they always had,—as much respect and attention as the most opulent in the assembly. I went in and out amongst my flock, never sinking my manhood in my ministry, the rights of my personality in the routine of my profession. No one expected me to consult them as to how many holidays I should have or when I should take them, what *ab extra* societies I should join, and what services I should discharge elsewhere. Far enough am I from holding myself up as an example to my brethren; but I would urge all young ministers, at the very outset of their career, to take an independent

stand and make themselves felt as men. Such a course ensured to me considerable ministerial prosperity, and unbroken peace and harmony from its commencement to its close. I know of no class of men in a more pitiable condition than those,—and their name is legion,—who have sacrificed their independency, sold themselves to their office, bartered away their manhood, become the vassals of their deacons, and given themselves up to that cadism and claptrap which are the conditions of a vulgar and worthless popularity. In the history of the ministry in this country, an old prophecy seems in rapid course of fulfilment: “Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people.” Who, in any measure acquainted with modern society, does not see that the clergy of all classes is passing into popular contempt, its “salt has lost its savour,” and it is being trodden under foot? And what has brought it to this, but the lack of honest manhood? Fawning flunkeyism is the curse of the modern pulpit.

The second result of my letter was the insurance of my life. The spirit of the letter led the people to think of the temporal claims and needs of their minister. The result was, a resolution to insure my life for the sum of £1200 in the London Life Association, the oldest and wealthiest assurance corporation in the city of London. The premium for this policy was at first high, upwards of £60 per annum, gradually decreasing until now it is gone down to £5. A good principle this, for it provides against that sad but inevitable decrease, by death or otherwise, in the numbers of the minister’s friends and admirers. I touch upon this question of ministerial assurance for the purpose of impressing upon my brethren the importance of bringing it under the attention of the laity. I never preach at what are called “ordination services” without endeavouring to impress this duty upon the conscience of the congregation. I have known many ministers who have died, whose income was insufficient to make provision for their family, so that the widow and orphans have been left in utter destitution, and have had to submit to the heart agony of having their condition brought under the notice of the public as objects of charity.

I hold it to be the duty of every Church to have a committee for this special purpose. Such a committee is far more unquestionable and necessary than committees for Bible Societies, Tract Societies, Missionary Societies, etc., etc. I would have the committee to be composed mainly of young people, a Secretary and Treasurer appointed, and each member of the committee furnished with a collecting card for the year.

The money so collected to be paid into an old-established and well-tryed assurance office, such a one as I have referred to. This work would be a burden to none, but a pleasure to all. If the congregation is small and poor, the collectors would not find it difficult to get subscribers for small amounts in the neighbourhood and amongst members of other congregations. A few years ago I was persuaded to become a director of a modern insurance society on the condition that they would carry out this work. I paid £112 to promote the undertaking. For twelve months, with the use of my name as a minister pretty well known in various parts of England, the lives of a goodly number of ministers were insured, and policies came in to the amount of £3000 a week. In the course of time I discovered, that whilst there were a few honourable men on the board, there were also joint stock swindlers, with whom the Secretary and the Manager were in close alliance. I withdrew, lost my money, and the company was wrecked by the "wreckers." My experience, however, in the effort was quite sufficient to convince me that an enormous institution could be built up, and immense good accomplished by insuring ministers' lives through the medium of their congregations.

Meanwhile the work need not be adjourned; it can be done through the medium of old and safe societies. Had I sufficient time and energy, I would give myself to this work as one of the divinest missions I can think of.

After writing my letter, I became thoroughly convinced that no man who used the Dissenting pulpit as a means of livelihood could possibly be independent; nor could the Dissenting pulpit ever yield an income adequate to the claims of an educated man and his children, unless it were situated in an attractive position in some enormous thoroughfare, or it pandered to the prejudices, the tastes, and passions of the intellectual rabble. The late John Burnett of Camberwell is reported to have said in the Congregational Library to the Rev. Robert Philip of Mabberly Chapel,—who stated to him that the voluntary principle nearly starved him,—“that the glory of the voluntary principle was, that it starved the men who ought to starve.” This was more sharp than true, more heartless than honest. Robert Philip was a far abler man than John Burnett; he was a profound thinker, an accomplished and prolific author, and few men in the denomination deserved a larger income than he.

Although I never regarded the pulpit as a means of livelihood, and was now convinced that for me it could never become so. I thought I could do something else, and I

attempted it, although I confess I did not attempt it for the sake of an income, for I never sought it on that ground. I started "THE HOMILIST." Paul said to the Ephesians, "Ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." "These hands," thank God for them! they are able to minister to our necessities. Agriculture, mechanics, trade, literature, medicine, law; a minister who wishes to be secularly independent of his people, can certainly get his livelihood from some of these, and perhaps he ought to. Honest labour can turn all metals into gold; it is the wand of divinity that can make the wilderness blossom as the rose.

It may be interesting to my readers to know *how* THE HOMILIST came into existence. A goodly number of the congregation which I gathered after the chapel had been erected and enlarged, were intelligent young men: some were editors, some were authors. Not a few I observed every Sunday taking notes of my sermons; some of them appeared in print without my knowledge or consent. One Sunday night when I could not sleep for a distracting toothache, the thought struck me I might be able to publish my own things myself, and in my own way. At this time there lived next door to me (indeed we built our houses together, and were neighbours for some half-dozen years) a minister, Rev. Chapman Davie, of Aldermanbury Chapel, London. He was a most genial man, but with many striking angularities. He was an effective speaker, but lacked the power of reaching or systematically arranging the great underlying truths of Scripture. Our gardens, which were of the same size and large, each occupying an acre, were only partially divided by wall and fence; the other part was partitioned by shrubs and evergreens, so that in our garden walks we frequently joined each other. Indeed, at the end of the week he would always come to me to know what I was going to preach on the Sunday. For years, what I preached at Stockwell he preached at Aldermanbury; not the phraseology, but the leading thoughts. He had a rich vocabulary and a wonderful flow of language, so that a few ideas would be sufficient to occupy him in a discourse of half an hour or more, which would interest his people.

One little incident here occurs to my mind of a somewhat humorous kind. At the time of the "Papal Aggression" (to which I have referred in a former paper), when the traditional evangelicalism of England was burning with indignation against the Pope, we both determined to preach on the subject. My text was: "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam that is in

thine own eye, and then seek to cast out the mote that is in thy brother's eye." The following was my plan: (1) *That sin may exist in man to an enormous extent, and yet he may be unconscious of it. He may have a "beam" in his eye, and yet not know it.* (2) *That the more unconscious a man is of his own sin, the more alive he will be to the sins of others.* The man with the beam in his own eye will look for the "mote" in his brother's. (3) *That the moral clearing of our own souls, is an essential qualification for enabling us to remove the sin from others.* "Then seek to cast out the mote that is in thy brother's eye." The great point was, that the Protestant Church,—which was roaring out in every village and hamlet of the kingdom its denunciations against Popery,—should look a little into its own history, should study Laud as well as Bonar. My friend would take my plan on the same Sunday morning. He had the full outlines, but depended upon his power of extemporaneous talk for the filling up and delivery. He was full of passion, and his memory was loaded with adjectives of the most terrible kind; and he came out in Aldermanbury Chapel on the occasion in such a way as to pain his best friends and to break up his congregation. He soon after retired from the ministry, studied medicine, took the necessary degrees in the art, commenced a practice in Merton, Surrey; after that, went to Vancouver Island; became member of the Parliament, fell from his horse, and was killed. Blessings on thee, my old friend! A more sociable man I never knew; a more interesting companion and truer friend I never had. And but few of all my contemporaries shall I be more delighted to meet in the upper realms than thee!

I refer to him here because he had much to do with the starting of THE HOMILIST. Constantly did he *urge* me to publish my plans. When I resolved to do so, I called on my old friend, Alfred Morris, of Holloway, being more in sympathy with his mind than with any other minister in London at that time, to submit my plan and solicit his co-operation. Though he heartily approved of my literary project, he refused editorial partnership and responsibility, because he considered its level of thought was above the popular pulpit. He referred to the failure of the *Evangelist*, a work of a similar character, edited by Drs. Leifchild and Redford, both able and distinguished men; and concluded by saying, in his own able and terse way, "I have not sufficient courage to kill a flea." He however afterwards contributed one or two articles to THE HOMILIST, lived to see its success, and rejoiced in its growing power.

I took my MS. to the late Ward & Co., Paternoster Row,

and they undertook its publication. I kept it on for six months, it did not pay expenses, and so I announced my intention of giving it up. This announcement brought, in the course of a few weeks, such hosts of letters from clergymen and ministers from all parts of England and America, that the publishers requested to be allowed to carry it on at their own responsibility. Thirty-eight volumes have now been published, upwards of 150,000 copies have been sold, and still it maintains its circulation and increases its power. This is considered a "wonder unto many." A wonder, because it has never been pushed by advertisements, and has been ignored by the denomination which claims the Editor as one of its adherents. A wonder, because, for obvious reasons, it is seldom recommended by the ministers who derive from it the greatest help. A wonder, because so many serials have died with all the prestige and recommendation of the Congregational Union. Where is *The Eclectic Review*? Gone. Where is the *Congregational Magazine*? Gone. Where is *The Christian Witness*? Gone. Where is *The Congregationalist*? Going. Where is there a denominational journal that lives by its own merits? A wonder, because of the number of competitors that have been brought into the field and have passed away. Where is *The Evangelical Pulpit*, started by Dr. Carlisle to supplement our orthodox deficiencies? Gone. Where is *The Congregational Pulpit*, that appeared for the same purpose, and was pushed by the recommendations and enriched by the contributions of Stoughton, Harrison, Allon, Binney, Brown? Gone. Where is *The Analyst*, the most powerful of all, which introduced itself by saying, "In my opinion, the time for the completion of *The Homilist* has fully come; it may now, with advantage, coalesce with *The Pulpit Analyst*, giving it the prestige of a unique history, and leaving it to supply some omissions which mark the service even of the strongest minds"? Our clerical readers throughout the world have falsified the prediction of our talented friend; for since those words were written, fifteen fresh volumes have appeared, and 36,000 copies sold. But where is *The Analyst*, that came swaggering like a knight into the field to sweep us clean away? Long since fallen. Where is *The Lantern*, that was to light up the clerical world? It appeared for a few months, flickered, smoked, and went out. Others have since appeared, whose pretentious language and plagiarized style are only equalled by their paucity of thought and poverty of blood.

The influence that *THE HOMILIST* has exerted upon the pulpit is acknowledged as something wonderful by the thoughtful

and the candid of all Churches. Its success inspires me with no proud exultation, but humbles and saddens me with the sense of my utter unworthiness of such an honour. How long it will continue to maintain its high position I know not. I never expected it to live half so long; and indeed at times I have wished it might decline, to give me justifying grounds to resign the truly onerous work. But as long as it continues in its present state, I am bound to it for life.

(*To be continued.*)

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

A CHRONOLOGICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

By CH. ED. CASPARI. TRANSLATED, WITH NOTES, BY MATRICE J. EVANS, B.A. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 38, George street.

It is not the portrait of Christ that is here presented, but merely the frame of that portrait. "A history of the life of Jesus," says the Author, "such as is aimed at on many sides, at the present day, is a genetic presentation, not only of what He was, but why He was so, and the manner in which He became so." This work connects Christ with the times and places in which He lived, taught, worked, suffered, died. "It belongs," says the Author, "to the very nature of history to have its roots in time and space. The reality of the historical person is conditioned by the fact that place, relations, and time are clearly ascertained. Many of the weightiest doubts urged against the authenticity of the gospel of John fall within this category. In this gospel, *e.g.*, it is said that Jesus proceeded from the place where John was baptizing, to Cana of Galilee in a single day. It is assumed then, as a proved truth, that this place of baptism was in the neighbourhood of Jericho, a city fully three days' journey from Cana: from this the conclusion is drawn, that it is impossible the account, which represents Jesus as travelling ninety miles in one day, can be the work of an eye-witness. The objection, however, disappears when it is shown that the scene of John's baptism was not near Jericho, but at the northern end of the Sea of Gennesareth, on the

upper Jordan, at a place some six or seven hours' distance from Cana of Galilee."

This remark will show the reason and the importance of the work here undertaken. This book consists of six divisions: the first treating the chronological basis of the history of Jesus Christ; the second, the birth and childhood of Jesus Christ; the third, the sea of Gennesareth and its environs; the fourth, the first year of the public ministry of Christ; the fifth, the second year of our Lord's ministry; the sixth, the third and last year of our Lord's labours. In addition to this, we have a very able Preface from the pen of the Translator, an Introduction by the Author, and an Appendix extending over some fifty pages more. The book is the result of very varied and extensive reading, profound research, and ripe scholarship. It must be ranked amongst the most learned and useful of the many valuable Biblical works that have issued from the famous house of Messrs. T. & T. Clark.

PRIESTHOOD IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. BY E. MELLOR, D.D.

London: Hodder & Stoughton, Paternoster Row.

The subject of this book is one to which some years ago we gave a little attention, and upon which we wrote one or two discourses. But through studies in another direction and the enormous amount of lecturing and scribbling on the subject in these days, we have ceased to feel any more interest in it than in the question of "dipping" and "sprinkling." Ritualism is neither born of argument nor sustained by it; nor will argument ever destroy it. It is the child of sensuousness and superstition; and these are the predominant elements in the vast majority of professing Christians. Hence the gross sensuous hymns in all popular hymn books, and the animal passion and gross illustrations in all popular sermons. The superstitious wish for priests, and they formulate a theory to justify their wish: the sensuous wish for forms, and they do the same. In the estimation of thoughtful and spiritual men these theories can, by such a thinker as Dr. Mellor, be shattered and given to the wind. But their roots remain untouched in the minds of the superstitious and the sensuous. What then, are they to be left alone? We had almost come to think so, until we heard some of these admirable lectures, and perused this volume. In exposing, as the Author has done, the puerility, the unscripturalness, the arrogance, the impiety, involved in sacerdotal and ritualistic theories, he has projected an influence into sacred literature that must work to destroy, wherever it goes, that worst of all crafts, priestcraft.

The Congregational Union,—which, some say, not unfrequently pushes the smallest and most garrulous men into prominent places,—in this case has chosen one of its greatest men to disrobe Anglican ecclesiastics of their proud pretensions. Indeed, we know no man in the communion to which he belongs, who could produce a book on this subject in all respects so rich in learning, vigorous in logic, beaming with genius, and booming

with eloquence. Limited as is our space for the notice of a work like this, we cannot forbear quoting the following passage, which thrilled us when we heard it chiming out in his manly voice :—" Everywhere and at all times men may offer their spiritual sacrifice of prayer and praise. Priests are no more, because temples are no more ; and temples are no more, because altars are no more ; and altars are no more, because propitiatory sacrifices are no more ; and propitiatory sacrifices are no more, because Christ hath offered Himself once for sins for ever. Superstition, usurping the name of Christianity, may rear her temples, which seem like magic creations, their arches intersecting far up in air, like the branches of lofty trees in some forest glade ; she may fill the tracery of the windows with colours that vie with those of the rainbow, and which cast their reflected glories through the place ; she may, to sound of organ and trained voices, utter the most touching words in music all but heavenly, that steals from arch to arch in long reverberation as if shrinking from the silence in which it dies away ; she may build her high altars, marshal her priests in solemn procession, clothe them with the richest fabrics that skill can make or wealth procure ; she may thus charm the imagination, wrap the soul in a sensuous elysium, dissolve it into ecstasies, make it feel even as if that sentimental joy or sorrow were the very godliness which fits for heaven ; but, except as the ' worship is in spirit and in truth,' all this may be nothing more than the fugitive transport of an impressible nature ; and all the beauty, and music, and wonder are but a dramatic insult on Him who rent the veil and abolished temples that He might consecrate the souls of men and dwell in them for ever."

THE DAY OF PENTECOST AND ITS PHENOMENA. A SERMON LECTURE. By F. ROWLAND YOUNG. London: E. Allen, Ave Maria Lane.

THE PERSONALITY OF CHRIST. A SERMON. By F. ROWLAND YOUNG. London: E. Whitfield, 178, Strand.

Mr. Young is no ordinary man. He lives in the highest literature, sympathizes with the highest themes, and pursues the path of thought with freedom, vigour, and independence. He thinks for himself; his convictions are his only credenda. Here we have two of his sermons, one on "The Personality of Christ," and the other on "The Day of Pentecost." Not one preacher out of a thousand could be found who can put so much valuable thought into so small a compass. Our principle is, not to recommend books because we agree with all the opinions they set forth, but because of the soul-force with which they are charged. On this ground we recommend these discourses.

FREEDOM OF THE WILL VINDICATED. By the late Rev. J. S. STEWART. Glasgow: David Bryce & Son, Buchanan Street.

A book challenging profitable thought, by a very thoughtful man. We fear that the readers of such a work as this are very few in this superficial age.



The Leading Homily.

LAZARUS: HIS LIFE AND ITS LESSONS.

No. I.

The Secular Position of the Friends of Jesus.

"NOW IT CAME TO PASS, AS THEY WENT, THAT HE ENTERED INTO A CERTAIN VILLAGE: AND A CERTAIN WOMAN NAMED MARTHA RECEIVED HIM INTO HER HOUSE. AND SHE HAD A SISTER CALLED MARY, WHICH ALSO SAT AT JESUS' FEET, AND HEARD HIS WORD. BUT MARTHA WAS CUMBERED ABOUT MUCH SERVING, AND CAME TO HIM, AND SAID, LORD, DOST THOU NOT CARE THAT MY SISTER HATH LEFT ME TO SERVE ALONE? BID HER THEREFORE THAT SHE HELP ME. AND JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO HER, MARTHA, MARTHA, THOU ART CAREFUL AND TROUBLED ABOUT MANY THINGS: BUT ONE THING IS NEEDFUL: AND MARY HATH CHOSEN THAT GOOD PART, WHICH SHALL NOT BE TAKEN AWAY FROM HER."—*Luke x. 38-42.*

THE scene referred to in the words of the beloved physician, just now read, was witnessed in the town of Bethany, in the early days of our Lord's public ministry. Few associations are more full of charm than those which are now for ever connected with this small town, or, as we should say in this populous country, this insignificant village. The footprints of Jesus in its lonely streets, His prayer breathed upon its morning air, and His tears in its old graveyard, have hallowed for ever every object connected with it. The stones of its ruined dwellings, and the very dust which the wind sweeps from the *débris*, are sacred in our estimation.

This estimate of Bethany, the home of Lazarus, is no proof of our superstition. It is not so much that we revere the

things, as that the things suggest such thoughts to our minds as engender feelings peculiarly holy and elevating.

Bethany is a small village which faces the east, and is situated at the foot of Mount Olivet, just as it rises from the plain. This mountain, so rich in hallowed scenes, with its barren sides and rocky summit, stands westward from the town and conceals Jerusalem from sight. A ridge rises just above the town, so that it seems to nestle in the bosom of the mountain. As you stand in its solitary street,—for it has but one, and the population does not exceed twenty families at present,—you can see a long way eastward, even as far as the valley of the Jordan. A plain lies before you well-known in sacred geography as the wilderness of Judæa. This plain is a waste howling desert, with scarcely a tree or shrub as far as the hills of Moab and the deep depression of the Dead Sea, the site, in bygone days, of Sodom and Gomorrah. No town or village is seen in all the plain. The place is quite deserted by living beings, except that here and there may be seen a few black-eared goats cropping the coarse grass of the desert, and a few daring robbers, who find their living by plunder and make their home in rocky caves. It was in this desert the man fell among thieves, according to the parable.

A road leads from Bethany to Jerusalem, turning first to the south, then to the west; it passes over the hill's brow and then turns to the north, proceeding down to the valley of Jehoshaphat; it crosses then the brook of Kedron by a rustic bridge, and winds up amid a host of vineyards to the city of David on the sacred hill of Sion.

Along this lonely road our Saviour was wont to travel in the latter portion of His public life. At early dawn, when the birds were just beginning their early song of praise, and when the dew lay thick upon the grass, Jesus was often seen, sometimes with one or more of His disciples, but oftener, perhaps, alone, walking up the hill as the rising sun poured forth a stream of glory to pave with golden light the path He trod.

When men retired home from duty, and the shadow of

the night lay brooding in the valley, then, in the last lingering ray of twilight, might be seen the Saviour of mankind as a weary pilgrim passing over the brow of Olivet, with His figure bending with weakness and toil, projected as a dark object on the glimmering western sky.

Bethany was the native place of Lazarus and the home of his sisters Martha and Mary, as well as His home at last. In the house of Martha Jesus found rest from toil, and was oft refreshed by genuine sympathy. Nothing more is known of the family of Lazarus at the time to which my text refers than what is stated in the text alone. At a later period we are again introduced to the family by John the Evangelist. From all sources of information we gather that this family, so dear to our Lord, had had many trials in their day. Few had suffered half so much, and none perchance had suffered more. It may be that our Saviour's heart and theirs were drawn the more closely to each other on this account, for those hearts which have been robbed of all they felt dear to them seek to be filled with sympathy, as the thirsty root of a tree grows in the direction of the water, and a sympathizing nature is always most at home where the flood of inward kindness may find an outward flow.

The father and mother of these kind sisters in Bethany had long since been gathered to their final resting-place. The silence of Scripture respecting the parents in the text and in the narrative of the affliction and death of Lazarus, seems to me to be a satisfactory proof of this. Martha, too, appears to have become a widow in the bloom of youth. Some have supposed that Simon the leper was her husband, but that he was separated from her on account of his disease. For this supposition, however, there seems to be no ground; for if the husband had been a leper, is it not probable, nay, almost certain, that he would have been restored by our Lord, so that his name would have appeared in connection with the burial or resurrection of Lazarus? Would it not have been recorded of him as well as of the sisters of the dead, that he too said to Jesus, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother had not

died" ? From the fact that no mention is made of her husband, and that the Saviour was received into *her* house, it is almost certain that Martha was a widow. Her hope of sunshine ceased at early dawn. Her day of wedded life began amid a thunderstorm, and night soon followed on and buried her earthly hopes in gloom.

Mary lived with her sister; and though we are not informed of her personal trouble, she seems to have had a mind whose mood was melancholy. Lazarus, their only brother, resided with them, though not at the time referred to in the text. He was probably then at college, sitting at the feet of Ben Uriel, the renowned disciple of Rabbi Hillel the great.

How welcome as a guest would Jesus be in such a home as this! How precious would be His words of comfort! When He came from the city,—when it was often late at night, and He was weary with toil and vexation arising from the unbelief of His disciples and the plotting of scribes and Pharisees against His influence and His life,—He ever met with kind greetings in the house of Martha. He never came, but He was welcome. And as the sun brings healing in its wings, brings light and joy and cheerfulness to a world which just before was dark and gloomy, so Jesus brought life and comfort to the home of Lazarus. There, seated around the burning logs, as the storm-wind howled among the olives, oaks, and almond-trees which grew around the house, Lazarus would tell the Saviour of his hopes, Martha of her trouble, while Mary sat silently listening to His words.

The very close and constant friendship existing between our Lord and the family of Lazarus naturally suggests this inquiry:—How and when and where were they introduced to each other? We find, however, no answer to any part of this threefold question. We find them met together as narrated in the text; but the style of the narrative is such that we can scarcely think that it represents their first meeting. It presents them rather as old familiar friends. Had Jesus been a stranger to the sisters up to this time, Martha would scarcely have wished Him to rebuke her sister Mary for what she

had certainly mistaken for idleness. She would scarcely, though she was always very free spoken, have hinted that He encouraged her sister's indolence, "Dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me." She would not have asked a stranger thus to interfere with her domestic arrangements. The whole narrative shows that Jesus, Martha, and Mary were old familiar friends. We have no information of their first interview. We are introduced to them for the first time in the text, and there we find them friends, apparently old acquaintances. Martha's many troubles probably led her in search of comfort. Judging from her temperament as represented by the Evangelist John, she was not one of those who would or could conceal her grief, or confine her sorrow to her own heart. Her heart was wounded, and she went forth in search of healing. Her manner was very free, and she would soon make herself at home among strangers, and make them interested in her case. She no doubt met some who had seen Jesus, and who could tell something of His more than human love. At length, after many disappointments, she was led to the great Physician. Jesus kindly listened to her tale of woe, and spoke to her many words of everlasting comfort; and from that time to the day of His death, the house of Martha became His home while He sojourned in Judæa.

The inquiry now arises, What was the secular position of the family of Lazarus? Were they rich or poor? Many, perhaps the majority, of our Lord's friends were in poor circumstances, but not all. Some women in Galilee could give to Him of their substance. Joseph of Arimathea was a man of wealth. John and James, the sons of Zebedee, were the proprietors of fishing crafts, and occupied a position in life sufficiently high to embolden their mother to ask for them the highest honours in Messiah's kingdom—"Grant that my two sons may sit, one on Thy right hand and one on Thy left hand when Thou comest into Thy kingdom!"

By His miracles of healing, as in the case of Jairus, our Lord had endeared many of His rich countrymen to Himself,

and laid them under obligations to His bounty. If facts tend to show that the family of Lazarus were happily circumstanced in life, that is no reason why they and Jesus should not be dear to each other. Wealth is no sin, and poverty is no virtue.

An impartial examination of this subject may be difficult, as it has been generally assumed that they were poor. The notion of their poverty may have originated from a confounding of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus with the narrative of the Lazarus of Bethany. The name Lazarus has been supposed in both cases to refer to the same person. This notion, originating in a misconstruction of Scripture, has been thought to derive support from the fact that our Lord, going from Bethany to Jerusalem one morning, is said to have been hungry on the way, "Now in the morning as He returned into the city, He hungered" (Matt. xxi. 18). It is supposed that the kind friends who gave Him shelter beneath their humble roof, had not wherewith to supply the wants of His physical nature that morning, and so He hungered on His way.

This view of the subject may be the most romantic in one sense, but does not necessarily arise from the narrative. Physically, our Lord was weak, and His frame was frail. His daily sorrow for the sins of men cast a shadow over all His life and made Him "a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief." It is never said that He even smiled. The sight of sin and the ruin it had caused in His own once beautiful world, grieved His loving spirit, so that it is recorded of Him, not that He smiled, but that He wept. A state of such mental depression weakened His physical energies and ultimately brought His life to a sudden termination, by the literal breaking of His heart, as has been clearly proved by the researches of an able physician, the late Dr. Stroud. As once He sat weary and faint for want of food at Jacob's well, He hungered on His way from Bethany to the city of Jerusalem, He having been unable to take sufficient support before commencing His journey that morning. The cause of His faintness by the way

is thus not *legitimately* traced to the poverty of His friends, but may have arisen from His physical weakness.

We thus find that there exist no reasons for the supposition that Lazarus and his friends were poor; but are there any reasons to suppose that they were rich?

That these friends of Jesus in Bethany were in happy secular circumstances, to say the very least, appears to me evident from the fact, (a) that they are spoken of as those to whom in some way the town of Bethany belonged, for John says (chap. xi. 1), "Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, *the town of Mary and her sister Martha.*" Bethany is here spoken of as their town. This denotes (1) that they were large landed proprietors in the district; or (2) that they were so much better known than any others of the inhabitants as to justify the designation of the town as the place of their abode. In either case they must have occupied a position of secular influence and superiority. To suppose that John referred his Christian readers to Bethany as the town of Mary and Martha because these two women were well known to the Church, is a mistake, as in that case it would have been spoken of as the town of Lazarus, who was a much more celebrated character in the early Church than his sisters could be, because he had been raised from the dead. I shall explain the omission of his name at a future time.

That the family of Lazarus were not poor, may be gathered from the fact, (b) that Mary, at a feast held in honour of Jesus, poured upon the Saviour's feet a box of ointment valued by Judas at three hundred pence, or denarii.

A denarius, estimating its value by weight, would be equal to seven pence half-penny in the time of Christ, according to the lowest estimate; but as money generally becomes of less value as ages roll on and precious metals become more plentiful, we must not suppose $7\frac{1}{2}d$ in our day to be equal to a Roman denarius. A denarius, or, as it stands in our version of Scripture, a penny, was represented by our Lord in the parable of the vineyard as a day's pay for a vine-dresser. Taking three shillings as a low average of the wages of such

persons in England, the 300*d.*, or denarii, would be equal to £45 of our money. This is no over-estimate of the value of the Roman penny, as we are informed by Tacitus that a Roman soldier received less than a penny, or denarius, for his day's pay. "The life and limb of a soldier are valued at ten asses a day. . . . Let every soldier receive a denarius a day. . . . The prætorian cohorts receive two denarii for their daily pay."—*Tacit. An. i. 17.*

Now, a poor person was not likely to have in possession a box of such costly ointment; nor would it have been right for such a treasure to be spent by such a person in the anointing of a friend, however dear. The anointing was by no means necessary, though it showed the affection of the anointer. When Judas murmured at the waste, our Lord fully justified Mary, which, I think, He would not have done had she and her friends been poor.

It so happens, sometimes, that that which would be condemned in a poor man would be commended by Christian public opinion in a wealthy person. If, for example, a poor man should, by patient toil and unwearied industry, lay aside, say £40 or £50; and if, moreover, from a conviction that God's house should be beautiful as well as convenient, he should spend the whole of this money in placing in the house of God a beautiful window, he would be most certainly condemned by the Christian public. Men would feel that he ought to have given a part of his only property to better the condition of the poor, to support sabbath schools and home and foreign missions; to support the ministry at home, as well as other benevolent institutions. But if a man of wealth, who gave to every noble movement a helping hand, spent £50 or £100 in beautifying the house of God, his act would be almost universally represented as that of a noble Christian man. The act of Mary (John xii. 3) was an exact parallel to this. Had she been poor, her conduct would have been worthy of condemnation; but if she was rich, then her conduct was deserving of praise. Her act was condemned by Judas, because he lost thereby the chance of thieving out of God's treasury; it was

commended by Jesus, because she did not neglect to provide for the poor while she showed her affection for her friend by anointing His feet with the costly spikenard and wiping them with the flowing tresses of her hair. Had Mary neglected the poor, I believe that Jesus would have condemned her; but His reply to Judas showed that while she gave liberally to the poor, her religion did not require that she should neglect to provide for the honour and comfort of her friends. She was at liberty to do the latter because she did not neglect the former.

That the family of Lazarus occupied a high secular position in Judæa may be also argued from the fact, (c) that a large number of Jews came to comfort them after the death of their brother, and remained with them until the fourth day, and would probably have remained longer if Lazarus had not been raised from the tomb.

The peculiar form of the grave, probably hewn in a rock, like that of Joseph of Arimathea, has been mentioned as proving the same thing. But not to have recourse to any doubtful arguments, sufficient has been said, I think, to show a very strong probability that the friends of Lazarus in Bethany were persons of wealth and of secular eminence in their country.

There is a beautiful and most important lesson for the rich arising from this fact. While the Bible is most emphatically the poor man's book, while the Gospel addresses itself in a peculiar manner to the sons of toil, while it is an abiding evidence of the divinity of the Christian Faith, that "the Gospel is preached to the poor," the wants and the welfare of the rich are not overlooked. The rich may learn the way in which they can secure the commendation of God, by looking to this family in Bethany.

Jesus was poor, and needed help and sympathy; and He found pecuniary aid and comfort in His noble enterprise from the family of Lazarus. Jesus had not, what the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air claim as their birthright, "where to lay His head;" but He found shelter and welcome in the

house of Martha. What these friends gave to Jesus, they gave without any expectation of requital, yet were they blessed for every deed.

Some of our men of wealth may say, Ah! I wish I had lived in the days of the incarnation; I wish I had seen the kind face and listened to the sweet voice of Jesus; would I not have welcome Him to my home? Would I not have given to Him both food and shelter? He should have had all which my wealth and station could have secured for Him; but those days are gone, He is not here. I am denied the privilege granted to the friends of Lazarus.

Not so, my friend. You have Jesus here still. You may clothe Him, feed Him, comfort Him. Does He not say that in the Judgment He will bless some because they gave Him food and clothing, and that He will despise others because they gave Him none? And yet these never saw Him except as they saw Him in His saints. But He explains the mystery when He says, "inasmuch as ye did it, or did it not, to one of these my brethren, ye did or did it not to me." The bread which you give to the virtuous poor, you give to Jesus. The cup which you hand to the thirsty saint you give to the Saviour of the world. They who succour honest poverty, do an act of kindness to Him who was the son of God and son of man. Those who take the orphan child beneath the wing of affection, feed him, clothe him, shelter him beneath their roof, and let him sit with their own children on the hearth of comfort when the cold frost chills and the storm wind howls without, feeds, clothes, and shelters Jesus as truly as did the friends of Lazarus in ancient Bethany. Yes, my brethren, if you have it in your power and do not neglect to wipe away the flowing tear, soothe the wounded soul, quiet into peace the sigh which heaves the breast, pour oil of healing into the bleeding heart, carry light to homes dark with destitution, and help, by kind words and a secret gift of gold or silver, the poor but honest labourer who struggles like a drowning man for life to save his family from either want or parish pay, you do it all for Jesus, and your reward is sure.

Once upon a time I read a story of a Christian soldier who was preceded in the march by many others. The air was cold, and snow lay thick upon the ground. A poor man stood shivering and half-naked by the way. The many passed him by, some with pity, but none with help. The Christian soldier came at length. Silver and gold he had not, but was himself covered with a cloak. He cut it with his sabre in the midst, and wrapped one-half around the shivering man, and gathered more closely around himself the other. The legend says that the soldier died, and that upon entering into heaven he saw the Saviour of mankind clothed in that very half cloak which he had wrapped around the poor man. The Saviour bade him welcome to His side and said, pointing to His garb, "Inasmuch as ye did it to my poor brother, you did it unto me."

The lesson of this legend is true and beautiful, for it is ever true, as the poet said, of Jesus,—

"He in His measure feels afresh
What every member bears."

Oh ! what a glorious fact is this to bear in remembrance ! Jesus does not overlook us, though we may be poor or obscure.

"O Blessed Lord ! what bliss to feel Thee near,
Faithful and true ;
To trust in Thee, without one doubt or fear,
Thy will to do ;
And all the while to know that thou, our Friend,
Wilt care for us and lead and love us to the end."

THE LATE EVAN LEWIS, B.A., F.R.S.S., F.E.S.

London.

PHILANTHROPY.—Conventional patriotism means little more than a hatred of all that dwell beyond the narrow boundaries of our own country. Christ requires philanthropy, not patriotism, to be the rallying point of empires, and all petty nationalities to be lost in the great sentiment of a world-wide brotherhood.

The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone philologically through this **TANAKH**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) The **HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3) The **ASSESSMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) The **HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately educed, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

No. CII.

The Pious Experiences of an Exile.

“**HEAR MY CRY, O GOD; ATTEND UNTO MY PRAYER.**” etc.—*Psalms* lxi. 1-8.

HISTORY.—This Psalm is ascribed to David, and is dedicated “to The chief Musician upon Neginah.” The expression occurs at the beginning of Psalm liii., and at the close of the hymn Hab. iii. 19. The word Neginah means “stringed instruments,” and it occurs in the title of six other Psalms, namely Ps. iv., vi., liv., lv., lxvii., lxxvi. The title means, that the chief musician, or precentor, to whom it was dedicated, must have it performed with instrumental music. The cause and circumstances of its composition are not known with certainty. It was, however, in all probability at the time of Absalom, composed in Mahanaim or in Gilead, when the

army of the king had smitten the rebels in the wood at Ephraim. David was driven into exile on the rebellion of Absalom (2 Sam. xvii. 22). Psalms xlii. and xliii. may refer to the same period, for they are marked by the same general features. The tranquil tone of this Psalm implies that perilous circumstances were disappearing and that the king was expecting to return home.

ANNOTATIONS: Ver. 1.—“*Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.*” This language we have often had (Psalm i. 2; xvii. 1-6; xxxix. 12).

Ver. 2.—“*From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee.*” The ancients regarded the earth as one extended plain, having

certain limits or boundaries. David was beyond Jordan, and regarded himself as beyond the border of the land which Moses saw but was not permitted to enter. "*When my heart is overwhelmed.*" The word "*overwhelmed*" means covered, and the idea is, "*When my heart is mantled or shrouded with sorrow, lead me to the rock that is higher than I;*" which means, lead me to some place of refuge, some stronghold where I may be safe. God is the true rock of souls.

Ver. 3.—"*For Thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.*" He had found this in all the dangers with which Saul had threatened him, and now his past experience forms a ground of hope.

Ver. 4.—"*I will abide in Thy tabernacle for ever.*" Reference is here to the tent which was pitched in Zion to receive and retain the ark of God, and the innermost part of which was the holy of holies. The tents in the wilderness were temporary, and were emblems of the transient. This tent was durable and was the emblem of the enduring. "*I will trust* [margin, "*make my refuge*"] *in the covert of Thy wings.*" As young birds seek protection under the outstretched wing of their parent, so he would confide in God.

Ver. 5.—"*For Thou, O God, hast heard my vows: Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear Thy name.*" "*My vows.*" The great vow of vows is the dedication of himself once for all to his long-suffering and merciful God. This was the vow of Jacob (Gen. xxviii.). All other vows are subordinate to this. "*The possession of the land, which it was attempted to wrest from him.*" Absalom, however, was but the

instrument; it was his own heinous transgression that brought the calamity upon him. God had in mercy restored him."

—Dr. Murphy.

Ver. 6.—"*Thou wilt prolong the king's life* [margin, "*add days to the days of the king*"]; *and his years as many generations*" [margin, "*generation and generation*"]. This does not mean the perpetuity of his dynasty, or the dominion of an ideal being. All it means is, his confidence, that notwithstanding the danger with which he had just been threatened by absolute rebellion, he should still live for some time to come. That his years would be as generation after generation, as age after age, that he would live longer than the average generation, which he did, for he was now about seventy years of age, and the average life of a generation was not more than thirty.

Ver. 7.—"*He shall abide before God for ever: O prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him.*" Delitzsch translates the sixth and seventh verses into the language of prayer. His translation is: "*Days to the days of the king do Thou add, let his years be as a generation and a generation. Let him remain for ever in the presence of Elohim—mercy and truth do Thou appoint to preserve him.*"

Ver. 8.—"*So will I sing praise unto Thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows.*" His resolution is to continue in the worship of God, in the daily performance of his religious duties.

ARGUMENT.—This Psalm consists of two stanzas of four verses each, and may be divided into two parts. (1) The prayer of confidence and (2) the expression of hope in God.

HOMILETICS.—This prayer is the devout language of an exile. David was away from Jerusalem, from Canaan, far

off in the region beyond Jordan. Here you have the language of his heart, and in it he reveals several things:—

I. A DEEP SENSE OF ISOLATION. "From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee." The man who had lived in the palace at Jerusalem, identified himself with the interests of a nation, and worshipped in the tabernacle with a great congregation, far away in the solitudes of Gilead, now felt deeply, no doubt, his isolation. Few feelings are more saddening than the feeling of loneliness. It hangs like a cold leaden cloud over the heart. In this loneliness, and far away from the scenes of his home and populations of men, he prays. The Great Father is accessible in all seasons of the soul, and all points of space. Whoever is absent, God is present. Whatever society we are deprived of, we may enjoy fellowship with the great Fountain of love. We discover here,—

II. A FELT NEED FOR DIVINE HELPS. "When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Many things would tend to overwhelm the heart of David with sorrow:—the conduct of Absalom his son, the treachery of professed friends, the disorders of his country, and above all, remorse on account of the many wrong things he had done and which had perhaps brought all these distresses upon him. Under such a load of sadness, he feels that his only hope is in God, "lead me to the rock that is higher than I." The soul in its sorrow requires something outside of itself and greater, and there is a Rock for tempest-tossed souls. We discover,—

III. A YEARNING FOR LOST PRIVILEGES. "I will abide in Thy tabernacle for ever." He was far away from this tabernacle now, this scene of public worship—a scene where he had often worshipped and experienced the raptures of religion. Profoundly does he feel the loss, and hence he resolves on his return, to abide there, not only to visit it occasionally, but to continue as a resident, "dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life." When there, he had felt like the young bird under the wing of its parent, warm, safe, and happy; and this privilege he yearned for again. "I will trust in the covert of thy wings." It is an old adage, that "the well is not

missed until it is dried up." The loss of blessings is evermore the means of deepening our impressions as to their value. We discover,—

IV. AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF DIVINE KINDNESS. "For Thou, O God, hast heard my vows: Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear Thy name." The "heritage" here mentioned is participation in the honours and privileges of the chosen people, and such were indeed great. To them, Paul said, "pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came." What a heritage! And this David acknowledges as being given to him by God. Whatever privileges we have, personal, social, political, or religious, our "heritage" is the gift of God. We discover,—

V. AN ASSURANCE OF FUTURE PROSPERITY. "Thou wilt prolong the king's life." He seems to have been assured of two things.

First: *The lengthening of his rule as a king.* "Thou wilt prolong the king's life:"—add days to that reign which was nearly brought to an abrupt termination.

Secondly: *The continuation of his privileges as a saint.* "He shall abide before God for ever." These two things he seems to have been assured of—that he should live for years, and for years to come enjoy the presence of his God. Blessed assurance this!

VI. A CRY FOR MORAL EXCELLENCE. "Prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him." "Mercy and truth." These are the cardinal virtues. "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." A soul full of benevolence and in harmony with eternal realities. In this all good is comprised. Herein Paradise blooms and blossoms. The profoundest hunger of all souls should be for these two things, grace and truth. Having these, all else follows.

VII. A RESOLUTION TO WORSHIP FOR EVER. Worship is the highest end of being. Religion, or worship, is not the means to an end, it is the grandest end of existence.

CONCLUSION.—Such are the states of mind, as indicated in this Psalm, which David possessed in his exiled condition.

HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF JOB.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering; but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

No. LXVI.

The Speech of Elihu.—2. A Young Preacher justifying his Mission.

"BUT THERE IS A SPIRIT IN MAN: AND THE INSPIRATION OF THE ALMIGHTY GIVETH THEM UNDERSTANDING. GREAT MEN ARE NOT ALWAYS WISE: NEITHER DO THE AGED UNDERSTAND JUDGMENT. THEREFORE I SAID, HEarken to me; I ALSO WILL SHOW MINE OPINION. BEHOLD, I WAITED FOR YOUR WORDS; I GAVE EAR TO YOUR REASONS, WHILST YE SEARCHED OUT WHAT TO SAY. YEA, I ATTENDED UNTO YOU, AND, BEHOLD, THERE WAS NONE OF YOU THAT CONVINCED JOB, OR THAT ANSWERED HIS WORDS: LET YE SHOULD SAY, WE HAVE FOUND OUT WISDOM: GOD THRUSTETH HIM DOWN, NOT MAN. NOW HE HATH NOT DIRECTED HIS WORDS AGAINST ME: NEITHER WILL I ANSWER HIM WITH YOUR SPEECHES. THEY WERE AMAZED, THEY ANSWERED NO MORE: THEY LEFT OFF SPEAKING. WHEN I HAD WAITED, (FOR THEY SPAKE NOT, BUT STOOD STILL, AND ANSWERED NO MORE;) I SAID, I WILL ANSWER ALSO MY PART, I ALSO WILL SHOW MINE OPINION. FOR I AM FULL OF MATTER, THE SPIRIT WITHIN ME CONSTRAINETH ME. BEHOLD, MY BELLY IS AS WINE WHICH HATH NO VENT; IT IS READY TO BURST LIKE NEW BOTTLES. I WILL SPEAK, THAT I MAY BE REFRESHED: I WILL OPEN MY LIPS AND ANSWER. LET ME NOT, I PRAY YOU, ACCEPT ANY MAN'S PERSON, NEITHER LET ME GIVE FLATTERING TITLES UNTO MAN. FOR I KNOW NOT TO GIVE FLATTERING TITLES; IN SO DOING MY MAKER WOULD SOON TAKE ME AWAY."—*Job xxxiii. 8-22.*

EXEGETICAL REMARKS: Ver. 8.—

"But there is a spirit in man," etc. The spirit here, man's rational and moral nature, is understood; and on account of that the speaker claims inspiration. Perhaps he means to say, that the source of wisdom is not from without, but from within—not outward experience, but inward inspiration.

Ver. 9.—"Great men are not always

wise: neither do the aged understand judgment." The word "judgment," should have been translated *justice or right*. What he means is, that men's judgment is not to be taken as just and right because they are advanced in years.

Ver. 10.—"Therefore I said, Hearken to me; I also will show mine opinion." Because aged men

are not always wise, he feels justified in giving his opinion, and claims Job's attention to his utterance.

Ver. 11.—“Behold, I waited for your words; I gave ear to your reasons, whilst ye searched out what to say.” It would seem from this that Elihu had been present during the whole discussion, that he had heard the argument carried on between Job and his friends from its commencement to its close. He means to say, I was in no hurry to come forward, though I differed from what was said, I waited to the end and have sifted the arguments.

Ver. 12.—“Yea, I attended unto you, and, behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words.” “As you have none of you been able to convict Job of any of the enormous crimes you imputed to him, his complaints and pleadings have remained totally unanswered by you, whose arguments, based upon the supposition that he fully deserved the punishments that have been inflicted on him,—a supposition entirely unwarranted,—could not do otherwise than fall to the ground.”—Bernard.

Ver. 13.—“Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom: God thrusteth him down, not man.” Having thus paid a tribute of respect to the age of the three friends,—whom he is about to oppose,—he proceeds to show that he fully perceives the drift of their arguments, and that he cannot approve of them. Therefore, lest they should conclude from his silence that he approves of what they have said, he resolves to speak.

Ver. 14.—“Now he hath not directed his words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches.” The idea is, as Job has not ordered his words against me, I

approach the subject dispassionately and without prejudice, and I shall not answer him with your speeches.

Ver. 15.—“They were amazed, they answered no more: they left off speaking.” Here Elihu passes from the second to the third person, turns from the friends of Job to Job himself. Elihu expresses his astonishment that Job's friends had failed to answer him and that they had nothing more to say to him, but were thoroughly silenced.

Ver. 16.—“When I had waited, (for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more).” Here he expresses his disappointment at their silence.

Ver. 17.—“I said, I will answer also my part, I also will show mine opinion.” Since they are silent, I feel I have not only a right to speak, but am bound to, to show my right of opinion.

Ver. 18.—“For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me.” I have been silent, not because I have nothing to say, for I am full of matter or words, I have a great deal to say, and the spirit within me constrains me to speak.

Ver. 19.—“Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles.” Just as wine, when allowed to ferment in a cask or other vessel which has no vent-hole, may be expected to burst that vessel's walls, so does the subject I have to speak upon ferment and work within me. It is ready to burst like new bottles. These would be more likely to burst than old bottles, because new wine would be put into new bottles, as we read in Matt. ix. 17. “By bottles, here as well as in Matthew, of course, leathern bottles or wine skins must be understood.”—Bernard. Umbreit and some others have regarded Elihu as a vain and self-conceited young man

on account of such an utterance as this; but what man of fertile mind and strong convictions has not often experienced a fulness of sentiment within that grew almost to irrepressibility?

Ver. 20.—“*I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer.*” I will speak that I may breathe.—*Margin.* As if he felt that the sentiments within him were such a burden as to prevent free respiration.

Ver. 21, 22.—“*Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to*

give flattering titles; in so doing my Maker would soon take me away.” “I will not now accept the person of any man, neither will I use bland words to any man. For I know not how to use bland words; my Maker will almost have to forgive it me. No one can charge me with ever having used bland and flattering words to any one who required correction: my tendency lies toward the other extreme, so that God may perhaps find fault with me for conveying my correction in too frank and open a manner.” —*Bernard.*

HOMILETICS.—In these words we have the picture of a young preacher justifying his mission. Whether Elihu is a character fictitious or historic; whether, if historic, his doctrines and character are in perfect accord with truth and right or not, we are justified in taking his utterances for what they are worth, and turning them to the best spiritual account. Certainly, in the passage before us, he does appear as a young preacher, a discourser on the character and procedure of God, and propounding good reasons to justify the work he had undertaken. Those reasons, I think, we shall find quite sufficient to justify any young man in his endeavour to preach truth to his fellow-men. There are five reasons here:—

I. A CONSCIOUSNESS OF POSSESSING, IN COMMON WITH ALL MEN, A GOD-INSPIRED SPIRIT. “There is a spirit in man.”

First: There is a *spirit in man*. A rational, accountable, undying personality. This is a fact too universally accepted to justify formal argument in its support, a fact attested by scientific induction, the consciousness of every man, and the word of God. Elihu is not only conscious of a spirit within him, but feels that that spirit is from God. Many theories as to the origin of the human soul have prevailed in the world, and still prevail. There is the theory of *emanation*. There is one Infinite Spirit, and all other spirits are but emanations from that, parts of it, separate only from it for a little while, to be lost in it again as rivers are lost in the ocean. All

finite souls are like the waters rising in the sea, rising into the clouds, rolling over the land, and returning back to the sea again. There is the theory of *pre-existence*, either in a higher or a lower state. Some, holding this theory, say that the soul came down from a higher life; others, that it has risen from lower forms of being. Another theory, is that of creation. Every new soul is a new creation. This is called the theory of *insufflation*, because it affirms that God immediately breathes a new soul into every new being. Another theory, is that of *traduction*. This theory maintains that all souls have been transmitted from Adam in the way of generation. Another theory, is that of *fulguration*. It states that the germs of all souls were created with all the particles of matter, and were so thick through every part of nature, and are imbreathed in the first breath of the child. All these theories are profoundly interesting for thought.

Secondly : This spirit is *divinely inspired*. "The inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." It has within it primitive beliefs, moral intuitions, the eternal rudiments of all theology and moral law. These elements of Divine truth come not into the soul by education or by personal thought and culture, God put them there. They are inbred, not imported; they are not like lamps kindled by human hands, but are like the fixed stars, kindled by Heaven and burning on for ever. All men have this spirit within them. Hence all men are equally near to God, equally close to the fountain of all truth: the pauper as near as the primate. Hence, too, the implied conclusion of Elihu, he has a right to speak on moral subjects. Because the youngest and the poorest man has this spirit within him, he has as much right to form and express convictions on the great questions of duty and destiny as the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Pope of Rome. This seems to have been Elihu's conviction, and herein he was right.* It is blasphemous presumption for any man to pretend to give another licence to speak in God's name.

* See *Homilist*, Series IV., vol. iii., p. 1.

Another reason here is,—

II. AN IMPRESSION THAT AGE DOES NOT NECESSARILY BRING WISDOM. "Great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgment." If it were found that in proportion to a man's age, would be his wisdom, that the more years added to his life the more true ideas would be added to his intelligence, it would be presumption for the young to speak in their presence. But, alas! it is not so. There are old fools. The men (and they are the vast majority in all ages) who pass through youth and neglect to lay the foundation of all knowledge and cultivate the faculties for building up the temple of science within, are certain to become more stupid in intellect and more intensely dark in soul as years pass away. Hence the impression of Elihu was a right one, that he, though young, should speak. How often have we heard it said that young men have no right to stand up in the pulpit and lecture their seniors. If their seniors were more enlightened, their prelections would be impertinent and incongruous as well as worthless. But it is not always so, nor even generally so. Where there have been no studious habits, years contract men's faculties, narrow and darken their mental horizons. Hence in England to-day there are hundreds of young men, men of culture, men of intelligence and devotion, who are not only competent but are divinely authorized to preach, not only to the aged who have received no early education, but to the aged of our national grammar schools and Universities.

"Great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgment." Hence let young men of intelligence preach. For this reason Elihu did. "Therefore I said, hearken to me, I also will show mine opinion."

Another reason here is:—

III. A CONVICTION THAT RELIGIOUS TEACHERS DO NOT ALWAYS SAY WHAT REQUIRES TO BE SAID. "Behold I waited for your words, I gave ear to your reasons whilst ye searched out what to say. Yea, I attended unto you and behold there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words." He

had heard all that the three religious friends had to say, and all that Job, the just and upright man, had to offer in reply. He had expected something else from them. "When I had waited, (for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more;) I said, I will answer also my part, I also will show mine opinion." He was not like some of the modern critics of the pulpit, who condemn religious ministration without a calm inquiry into its nature and impartial judgment as to its merits, who,—because there is much ritualistic tawdry, morbid superstition, pietistic cant, and vulgar blasphemy connected with the pulpit,—condemn the whole as so much rubbish, and take no account of the teaching of our Arnolds, Fosters, Robertsons, and Morrisises. This Elihu heard the whole out to the end, each speech of each speaker, until they had nothing more to say, and then, feeling the deficiency, says, "I will show you mine opinion." I will not repeat what you have said. I will not "answer him with your speeches." I will not repeat your utterances. I will speak out my own convictions. I have something to say that you have not said, that ought to be said, and that something I feel bound to speak. Now, the man, however young, who has got such a conviction as this, is certainly justified, by his own conscience anyhow, in addressing others, even his seniors, about the things of God. God knows that there is much that requires to be said about the great spiritual realities and responsibilities of being which the modern pulpit does not say. Let young men of genius, conscience, and grace mark the deficiency and stand up, and hungry souls will gather in crowds around them to be fed.

Another reason is:—

IV. A CONSCIOUS FULNESS OF RELIGIOUS IDEAS STRUGGLING FOR UTTERANCE. "For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me. Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles." There are men,—confessedly few in every age,—whose spiritual nature is so fertile, that, as they think, thoughts on religious subjects come crowding into their heart, and mightily struggle for

utterance. While they "muse, the fire burns," and with volcanic force breaks through the mountains of conventional thought. Jeremiah was one of those men. "I will speak no more in His name," he exclaimed. "But His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." So Peter and John, when they stood before the Sanhedrim, said, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." When a man's religious thoughts thus swell and surge within him, however young he may be, he is justified in speaking, nay, is bound to speak. Necessity is laid upon him. It may be questioned as to whether any man who has not this spiritually fertile nature is justified in preaching, or whether any man, however fertile in thought, is justified only when he is full to irrepressibility. Modern sermons are to a great extent mere manufacture, compositions often carefully and elaborately prepared, containing the extinct dogmas of other men. What a contrast between the conventional and the genuine preacher, the man of verbal composition and the man of vehement thought, the empty-minded and the full-minded preacher. The former is always the most showy and sounding. Yesterday, sitting in an arbour in my garden near to a fountain and a pond, I heard for some minutes a roaring sound in the water-pipes. This noise subsided, when the water came up to the aperture and flowed down in liquid music to the pond. The noise was the noise of emptiness; the delicious music which silenced and superseded it, was the vibration of the vital spray. It is so with the preacher: emptiness roars in thunder, fulness rolls inspiring melody in the living stream.

The other reason is:—

V. A HIGH-MINDED INDIFFERENCE TO THE FROWNS OR FAVOURS OF MEN. "Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto men. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my Maker would soon take me away." The meaning is, May I never flatter men, for in a little while my Maker will bear me away. A man who is full of irrepressible truth has no respect for the adven-

titious distinctions of society. Kings, to a great soul, are not greater than beggars. Empty souls magnify adventitious distinctions, full souls minify them into nothingness. The smaller the soul, the greater the flatterer, the sycophant, and the flunkey. "Flattering titles!" Ah me! how preachers have used these. The fawning sycophancy of some of the old preachers, Anglican and Puritanic, as expressed in the dedications of some of their books, is in some form or other even too prevalent in the pulpits of England to-day. Congregations are flattered; and because they are flattered they are in many cases kept together. Elihu avowed a conscious superiority to this and a determination to avoid it.

"The deep conviction" says an excellent author on this passage, "that we are all soon to try the realities of a bed of death and of the grave, and that we are to go to a world where there is no delusion and where the ascription of qualities to us here which do not belong to us will be of no avail, would prompt to a wish to state always the simple truth. Under that conviction we should never so ascribe to another any quality of beauty, strength, or talent, any name or title, as to leave him for one moment under a deception about himself. If this rule were followed, what a change would it produce in the social, the political, the literary, and even the religious world!"

THE LAWS OF NATURE.—All the operations of nature are the result of God's agency. "He maketh His sun to rise, He sendeth the rain," etc. What is called science, refers these operations to laws—laws do everything. We are sick of this cant. What are these laws? Science cannot answer. I call not that philosophy which cannot give me an intelligible and adequate cause for events: I see the rivers flow, and the ocean roll, and the stars of heaven wheel along the dome of night; I mark the revolutions of the sun, see the clouds laden with oceans coursing through the upper fields of air, and the showers descending on the earth, and the lands bursting into new forms of life; and I feel that there must be some mighty power at work in the universe. What is it? I am told "law." I do not understand the answer, I am not satisfied. The Bible tells me, God, and I bow; my philosophy and my deepest instincts acquiesce in the response.

SERMONIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dorner; Lange; etc., etc.

No. LXVI.

Christ Greater and Older than Abraham.

"THEN SAID THE JEWS UNTO HIM, NOW WE KNOW THAT THOU HAST A DEVIL. ABRAHAM IS DEAD, AND THE PROPHETS; AND THOU SAYEST, IF A MAN KEEP MY SAYING, HE SHALL NEVER TASTE OF DEATH. ART THOU GREATER THAN OUR FATHER ABRAHAM, WHICH IS DEAD? AND THE PROPHETS ARE DEAD: WHOM MAKEST THOU THYSELF? JESUS ANSWERED, IF I HONOUR MYSELF, MY HONOUR IS NOTHING: IT IS MY FATHER THAT HONOURETH ME; OF WHOM YE SAY, THAT HE IS YOUR GOD: YET YE HAVE NOT KNOWN HIM; BUT I KNOW HIM: AND IF I SHOULD SAY, I KNOW HIM NOT, I SHALL BE A LIAR LIKE UNTO YOU: BUT I KNOW HIM, AND KEEP HIS SAYING. YOUR FATHER ABRAHAM REJOICED TO SEE MY DAY: AND HE SAW IT, AND WAS GLAD. THEN SAID THE JEWS UNTO HIM, THOU ART NOT YET FIFTY YEARS OLD, AND HAST THOU SEEN ABRAHAM? JESUS SAID UNTO THEM, VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, BEFORE ABRAHAM WAS, I AM. THEN TOOK THEY UP STONES TO CAST AT HIM: BUT JESUS HID HIMSELF, AND WENT OUT OF THE TEMPLE, GOING THROUGH THE MIDST OF THEM, AND SO PASSED BY."—*John* viii. 52-59.

EXPOSITION: Ver. 52.—"*Then said the Jews unto Him, Now we know that Thou hast a devil.*" ἐγνώκαμεν. We are sure, have found out. σαυρόν. ἔχ. "His implied claim to a dignity greater than that of Abraham and the prophets, and His assertion of supernatural virtue in His words were, as they affected to believe, a proof that He was a raving fanatic, possessed with an evil spirit that prompted Him to such extravagances."—*Webster and Wilkinson*. "Now we know." As if they had said, We stated this just now, and we were almost frightened by our rashness, but now we are certain that "Thou hast a devil."

Ver. 53.—"*Art Thou greater than*

our father Abraham, which is dead?" etc. The Jews understood Him to mean merely bodily death. Their meaning seems to be: Thou sayest that if a man keep Thy words he shall never die. Abraham kept God's words, and yet he died. So did the prophets, they kept God's words, but died. Yet Thou sayest, those that keep Thy sayings shall never die; who then art Thou? What arrogance, what blasphemy!

Ver. 54.—"*Jesus answered, If I honour Myself, My honour is nothing: it is My Father that honoureth Me; of whom ye say, that He is your God.*" These words seem to be uttered in order to prepare the way for the

more startling declaration which follows in verse 56. "*Honour Myself. If my honour is, as you say, self-fabricated. Is nothing. It is the nothing you pronounce it. Your God. The source of My true dignity is the God of Abraham, of the prophets, of Israel, and, as ye claim, of yourselves. Your quarrel is therefore with them and Him.*"—*Whedon.*

Ver. 55.—"*Yet ye have not known Him; but I know Him: and if I should say, I know Him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know Him, and keep His saying.*" καὶ οὐκ ἔγ. καὶ, yet (Mark iv. 32). ἔδν εἶπω. He implies that He cannot so speak of God as to disguise the fact of His intimate knowledge of Him, without speaking untruly, and imitating them, who spoke of God as their God and Father whereas they knew Him not. δημοῖος ὄμων. The ordinary construction is with the dative; but the genitive is used by classical authors: it makes the idea of comparison more prominent. τὸν λ. α. τηρῶ. If we take these words in connection with verse 51, He implies by them that He also lived by keeping His Father's word, as men should live by keeping His. Comp. vi. 57, xv. 10.

Ver. 56.—"*Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day.*" ἡγαλλιάσατο ἵνα ἴδῃ Exulted or exceedingly rejoiced that he should see: that is, exulted to see it by anticipation. "*And he saw it, and was glad.*" Does this mean that he saw it in prophetic vision, or that he saw it in his disembodied spirit from the sphere of celestial blessedness? Or that he saw it in the familiar intercourse which he had with the "angel of the Lord" when he appeared to him in his tent at Mamre? It scarcely matters. However, I incline to the last opinion. In either case, he saw it.

Ver. 57.—"*Then said the Jews unto Him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast Thou seen Abraham?*" Alford remarks that our Lord's age at this time cannot be inferred from this statement. Fifty years was with the Jews the term of ripe manhood; it was the age when the Levite ceased to officiate. All that is meant here is, You are not yet past middle life, not even on the verge of old age, and how canst Thou say that Thou hast seen Abraham?

Ver. 58.—"*Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.*" Dr. Brown's remarks on this verse seem a faithful explanation. *Before Abraham was* πρὶν Ἀβραάμ γενέσθαι. *Before Abraham came into existence, I am.* ἐγὼ εἰμι. The difference between the two verbs applied to Abraham and Himself in this great saying is to be carefully observed. *Before Abraham was brought into being, I exist.* The statement, therefore, is not that Christ came into existence before Abraham did, as Arians affirm is the meaning: it is, that He never came into being at all, but existed before Abraham had a being; which of course was as much as to say that He existed before all creation, or from eternity, as in ch. i. 1. In that sense, beyond all doubt, the Jews understood Him, as will appear from what follows.

Ver. 59.—"*Then took they up stones to cast at Him: but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.*" The last clause of this verse is considered by the best critics to be spurious. It is clear from the fact that the Jews took stones to cast at Him, that they regarded the expression "*Before Abraham was, I am*" as expressive of His eternity, and His

claim therefore to Godhead. This they regarded as blasphemy, and for the sin of blasphemy they felt justified in stoning Him. While the Jews were in the act of selecting the stones, it

would seem that Jesus moved away by a route which interposed projecting objects between them and Him, and so He escaped from the temple.

HOMILETICS.—These words present to us the fact that Christ is both *greater* and *older* than Abraham. The passage shows,—

I. That Christ is **GREATER** than Abraham. “Then said the Jews unto Him, Now we know that Thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and Thou sayest, If a man keep My sayings, he shall never taste of death. Art Thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead?”

Three things are to be noticed here:—

First: The *implied denial* of the Jews that Christ was greater than Abraham. In their implied denial we see (1) A sensuous interpretation. “Abraham is dead,” etc. They took death in its mere material sense, the death of the body; they had no profounder idea of death than the dissolution of mind from matter. The dissolution of mind from truth, virtue, happiness, God,—which is of all deaths the worse,—had not entered their carnal souls. The dissolution of soul from body,—or corporeal death,—is but the *palpable type* and the probable result of the separation of the human soul from the life of holiness and God. This is death—the death to which Christ referred; and this the carnal Jews misunderstood. Christ asserted that the man who practically obeyed Him would not taste of this death, nor will he nor can he. “This is life eternal, to know Thee.” In the implied denial we see (2) Their ancestral pride. “Art Thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? And the prophets are dead?” Their pride of ancestry led them to believe that Abraham was the greatest man in the universe. We are the greatest people in the world, for we descended from the loins of the greatest man, and that was Abraham. Ah me! these two things—sensuous interpretation and ancestral pride, have been in all ages, and still are, the greatest obstructions to the spread of truth.

Secondly: *The reply of Christ* to this implied denial. In His reply three things are noteworthy (1) He asserts that He honoured the Father, they did not. "If I honour Myself, My honour is nothing." (2) He knew the Father, they did not. "Yet ye have not known Him; but I know Him; and if I should say, I know Him not, I shall be a liar." He knew the Father. He was the only Being who knew Him. "No man hath seen God at any time," etc. (3) He served the Father, they did not. "I know Him and keep His saying." His "meat and drink was to do the will of His Father."

Thirdly: *The declaration of His superiority to Abraham.* "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad." However he saw it, He means it was a wonderful sight to him, Christ's day was a period that rejoiced Him. Elsewhere* we have drawn three general truths from these words. (1) That Christian piety turns the soul toward the future. It turned Abraham's mind to far distant ages. (2) That Christian piety fastens the soul on the Christ of the future. "My day." To the godly, Christ is everything in the future. (3) That Christian piety brings present joy to the soul from the future. It made Abraham glad.

The passage shows,—

II. That Christ is OLDER than Abraham. "Before Abraham was, I am." This declaration struck them,—

First: As *absurd*. "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast Thou seen Abraham?" Abraham lived thousands of years ago, how could he see Thy day? or how couldst Thou see Abraham? How absurd, for a man who had not reached middle life, to give himself a patriarchal age. This declaration struck them,—

Secondly: As *blasphemous*. "They took up stones to cast at Him." They evidently understood Him to mean that He existed before Abraham, and therefore put Himself on an equality with God.

CONCLUSION: How sublimely unique is Christ in the history

* See *Homilist*, Series III., vol. iii., p. 103.

of the human race! *Greater than Abraham.* Abraham was great, one of the most illustrious of the human family, the "friend of God," the ancestor of a wonderful race of men; but Christ is greater. Christ is *older* than Abraham. Abraham lived upwards of thirty centuries before; but Christ lived before Abraham. "Before Abraham was, I am." "In the beginning was the Word," etc., etc.

The Preacher's Germs of Thought.

Christ Knocking.

"BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE DOOR, AND KNOCK: IF ANY MAN HEAR MY VOICE, AND OPEN THE DOOR, I WILL COME IN TO HIM, AND WILL SUP WITH HIM, AND HE WITH ME."—*Rev. iii. 20.*

THE Laodicea of Scripture was forty miles east of Ephesus, in the western part of Phrygia. It was large and wealthy and was celebrated for its magnificent buildings; but numerous earthquakes have long ago brought it to desolation. Many of its inhabitants were engulfed by the earthquakes, and now "Ichabod" is written on that city which was once a scene of wealth and magnificence. The Church of Laodicea is specified as one of the "seven Churches of Asia," and commentators agree in saying that it was one of the first formed by the apostles. Nor are indications wanting to warrant the belief that in true life or power it was once in a flourishing condition. St. Paul makes a remarkable reference to this Church (Col. iv. 16). Some have inferred from this that the Apostle wrote an epistle to the Laodicean Church; but no trace of a *genuine* epistle is to be found, although one has been forged and circulated; but the evidences of its being a spurious one are so unmistakable that the Fathers unanimously rejected it as such. But God sent a letter to that Church (vers. 14-22). In it there are words of stern chastise-

ment, of loving counsel, of tender compassion; and considering how corrupt the state of that Church was, I know of no words that so well express the compassion of Christ as those of my text; "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock."

Notice:—

I. CHRIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE LAODICEAN CHURCH AND THE CHURCHES IT REPRESENTS. He stands knocking at the door, begging for admission. And from this representation it is inferential that whatever might have been the profession of this Church, and that was great, in reality Christ had been *turned out*, so that such a Church was a *Christian Church* only in name. From the context we learn that its appearance was respectable and its profession loud; but appearance and profession are nothing but a nuisance where reality is wanting.

First: *This was an affluent Church.* "Rich and increased with goods." Undoubtedly this indicates and was intended to indicate the outward prosperity of the Church. The city itself, I have said, was an opulent one, and we are warranted in believing that the Church was principally composed of wealthy members. The *building* in which they ostensibly met for worship, I can fancy, was in harmony with the social status of its members, composed of the costliest material, embellished in the most superb style, the acoustics perfect, æsthetic, beautiful; and with these things I have no fault to find. There is no reason why the Lord's house should not be beautiful. The Word of the Lord that came by Haggai needs yet to be spoken: "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in ceiled houses and this house lie waste?" But *material* things will not make a sanctuary, the presence of God is needed; and if He be not there to sanctify it, the costly structure, all its exquisite embellishments and decorations, are vanity. For religious purposes, what is a magnificent building worth, even though you call it a "temple," or a "sanctuary," or a "church," if Christ be turned out and the doors be barred against Him? Christ was thus expelled from the wealthy Laodicean Church, the door thus closed, while He stood *without*, knocking. There is a picture for an artist! The Lord of the Church thrust

out! Then I care nothing for the fellowship of those who are within, though you tell me they are affluent, and respectable, and refined, and aristocratic. Tell me where the humble meeting-house of the *faithful* is, that I may go there and find Christ! Have we to go back to St. John's time to find such a Church as my text represents? Laodicean lukewarmness exists still side by side with Laodicean affluence. I do not say that the affluence is the absolute cause of the lukewarmness, but its tendency is that way. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of heaven!"

Second: *This was an arrogant Church.* Its profession was loud, its pretensions great. It professed to be *the* Church—no Church in Asia comparable to it. What haughty assumption, what self-satisfaction and lofty pride breathe in the words, "I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing!" How different was Christ's estimate! Self-satisfaction means *self-deceived*. The Pharisees thought themselves perfect, and yet St. John, on seeing them come to his baptism, exclaimed, "*O generation of vipers!*" and Jesus saluted them with, "*Ye HYPOCRITES!*" And bear in mind that the self-satisfaction may exist where the wealth is wanting. Give some Churches a respectable building in which to assemble, a preacher who can speak grammatically and rhetorically and popularly; give them the Sabbath services with an ordinary or extravagant ritual, and the weekly or monthly or quarterly communion, and they are satisfied. Satisfied! while sinners are perishing and no one hastes to the rescue. Satisfied! when their hearts will not bear introspection and their lives are at the level of a cold morality. Satisfied! with ecclesiastical routine and religious pastime, while *the* purposes for which the Church exists are quietly ignored. Satisfied with Samson's satisfaction when, sleeping on the lap of Delilah, he was robbed of his God-given strength. Satisfied with externalisms, with unreality and sham. From such satisfaction, good Lord, deliver *us!* Reality in religion, spirituality in devotion, zeal in Christian service, joyousness in worship, holy enthusiasm, these are what we want. Or let us rather say, we want the

true, healthy life, for then the signs will assuredly be seen. Lukewarmness is hateful to Christ. It produces nausea: "Because thou art neither hot nor cold, I will spue thee out of my mouth!" And yet He waits to forgive that which is so offensive to Him. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock." The text is an equally true representation of,—

II. CHRIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS UNPARDONED SINNERS. Let us look at it in its detail.

First: *Christ at the door of the heart.* By your sin you have closed that door against Him, and if you refuse to open it, it will be because of your unbelief. His attitude teaches me,—

(1) *That He has pity for your soul:* pity in which stupendous condescension and infinite love are combined. Oh, how amazing! that He should come to your hard, ungrateful, unbelieving heart, and that He should love it notwithstanding its sin. (2) *That He has pardon for your soul.* He brings that pardon to the very door of your heart!

Second: *Christ STANDING at the door.* This indicates,—

1. His readiness to enter. 2. Danger of His departing. He is not *sitting*. Will He never weary with standing, and turn away His foot? Some He has left to whom He has returned. From others He has taken an eternal departure has returned again never!

Third: *Christ KNOCKING at the door.* By His sacrifice, by His Word, by His Spirit, by His Providence, by appeals drawn from earth and hell and heaven,—

"He now stands knocking at the door
Of every sinner's heart.

Fourth: *Christ SPEAKING to the heart.* (1) He speaks to all: "If any man," etc. (2) He offers to commune with all, "I will come in," etc. The old sneer is true still: "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them."

CONCLUSION.—(1) *Do you hear Him knocking?* No! Then it is because you will not hear. (2) *Do you hear Him knocking?* Yes. Then you may be saved now. Those that hear can open. "If any man hear and will open." Do not

trouble about election. If you hear Him knock, the rest depends on your *will*. WILL you open? (3) *Do you hear Him knocking?* Yes. Then if you *do not* open, you will be self-destroyed. When your condemnation is pronounced, you will have no excuse. You will be compelled to plead "guilty! deserved!" and God will say, Yes; "because I called and you refused!" and Jesus will say, "Because I knocked and you *would not* open!"

"Oh! in every breast that liveth
Is that strange mysterious door:

* * * * *

There the piercèd hand still knocketh,
And with ever patient watching,
With the sad eyes, true and tender,
And the glory-crownèd hair,—
Still a God is waiting there."—*H. B. Stowe.*

Sinners, give admission and welcome to the Saviour now, or, standing at His door at the last, in vain will be your agonized cry, "LORD, LORD, OPEN TO US!"

Tillicoultry, N.B.

ENOCH D. SOLOMON.

Ideal Youthhood.

"THAT OUR SONS MAY BE AS PLANTS GROWN UP IN THEIR YOUTH; THAT OUR DAUGHTERS MAY BE AS CORNER STONES, POLISHED AFTER THE SIMILITUDE OF A PALACE."—*Psalm cxliv. 12.*



FIRST: the character of youth is of the highest importance:—(1) *Personally*, it determines their happiness. (2) *Socially*, it determines their influence. (3) *Eternally*, it determines their destiny. Secondly: The culture of youth should engage the most careful attention. The text breathes a philanthropic prayer, and presents a possible ideal.

I. The ELEMENTS of Ideal Youthhood. The terms of the text are poetical, but significant. Here is the Oriental idea of a palace or temple in a garden. The figure denotes,—

First: *Strength.* The vigorous tree and the enduring and supporting stone. This strength is threefold. (1) Moral. Strength of principle; solid worth; backboned character; power to say No and do right "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation." (2) Intellectual. Mental stamina and grasp; brain-grip; independent thought. (3) Physical. A good animal basis.

Secondly: *Beauty.* The majestic and lovely tree, the elaborated architecture. Not veneered impotency, but polished power; not polite corruption, but amiable and attractive integrity and affection; not varnished and painted ugliness, but the natural and unconscious outshining of soul-beauty.

Thirdly: *Religiousness.* The trees must be "trees of the Lord's right-hand planting;" and the stones must be prepared and placed in the building by the Divine Architect for the Divine Glory. The strength and the beauty must spring from an inner godliness. All must be inspired by the Divine.

Fourthly: *Usefulness.* The calmness of the shade, the refreshing and nutritive qualities of the fruit, the utility of the pillars; the accommodations of the mansion, denote this idea. There must be no indolent living for oneself, but a self-sacrificing devotion to the good of others.

II. The REALIZATION of Ideal Youthhood. Three things are necessary:—

First: *Original Capacity.* Before there can be the tree, there must be the seed; and before the building, the material. Ideal youthhood is a development, not a creation. It is an outcome of what is within. This original capacity we have. (1) Religious instincts. "Man is a religious animal." Wherever, or in whatever circumstances he is found, he has a sense of God and of futurity; and this, not by logic, but by intuition. It is an essential part of his nature. (2) Moral capabilities. We have emotions, sympathies, affections, will, and conscience. (3) Intellectual faculties. We have the faculties of perception, reflection, retention. (4) Physical powers—heart, lungs, brain, hands, feet, etc.

Secondly: *Appropriate Culture.* The tree must be planted

and tended, or it will not grow. The stone must be chiselled, or it will not be polished. The original capacities of our nature must be disciplined, or they will not be rightly developed. (1) This culture must be based on a radical moral change. The original powers of our nature have been dislocated and depraved by the accumulation and transmission of sinfulness. This depravation and dislocation can be counteracted and remedied only by the redeeming work of the Son of God. With the dawning of consciousness this redeeming work begins to operate; and when recognized by parents, and accompanied with the repression of the evil and the encouragement of the good, it will continue to operate until the whole nature is converted, regenerated, and sanctified. Such recognition and training are, however, so exceptional, that most children grow up habitual sinners, and require a ruder and more marked conversion. Nevertheless, either gently or roughly, either gradually or instantaneously, either unobservedly or observedly, this change must take place, before culture can develop the powers. (2) This culture must be suited to the varied constituents of our being. (a) Our religious nature must be cultured, by forming us to habits of worship. (b) Our moral nature must be cultured, by forming us to habits of truthfulness, purity, honesty, and love. (c) Our intellectual nature must be cultured, by forming us to habits of study. The mind must be disciplined, and stored with useful knowledge. (d) Our physical nature must be cultured, by forming us to habits of health. Suitable food, pure air, due exercise, and avoidance of sensual indulgence.

Thirdly: *Voluntary Co-operation.* Here the analysis of the text proves inadequate to the requirements of the subject. In the case of the tree and the stone, original capacity and appropriate culture are sufficient to secure ideal vegetation and ideal architecture; but these conditions are not enough to realize ideal youth. There is a very important distinction between stone and tree nature on the one hand and human nature on the other. This distinction is expressed in the word *will*. A child can voluntarily neutralize external agencies;

material objects cannot. The one can refuse to be trained after a given order, the other is the creature of circumstances. Hence the need of voluntary co-operation in order to the realization of the ideal put before you. (1) Realize the true object of life. Solve for yourselves the problem of your Creation and Redemption. Why are you here? Why are you to be cultured? Low ideas of life are at the root of degradation and failure. (2) Make the most of your opportunities. *Yours*, as English-born in this nineteenth century, are very great. See that they are eagerly seized and diligently used. Be assured, there can be no success in any department of life without earnest and continued personal endeavour. (3) Be actuated by the highest motives. Not selfish, but benevolent and pious motives will lead you on to ideal youthhood and ideal manhood.

CONCLUSION.—Ideal youth is the highway to an honourable and useful earthly career, and to a blessed and ever-brightening destiny.

THOMAS BARON.

Suffolk.

Work with a Will, for God Works.

"WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING. FOR IT IS GOD WHICH WORKETH IN YOU BOTH TO WILL AND TO DO OF HIS GOOD PLEASURE."—*Phil. ii. 12, 13.*

IT were absurd to expect an insane person to think correctly, or to ask a dead man to work; it were equally absurd to enjoin upon the slave to lust and appetite the duty of developing a new nature. We cannot develop that of which we have not a germ; nor, on the other hand, will any bias God-ward be increased, unless we are willing. If man be independent of God in the matter of his own spiritual improvement, then there is no such thing as grace or the influences of the Spirit. If God's "to will," on the other hand, be such as to leave man no power of resistance, he is simply an automaton in the hands of his Maker, and consequently no longer an accountable being. To

assume the first, were to elevate man at the expense of God ; to assume the second, were to honour God at the expense of man.

This injunction to "work" was addressed to Christians, and to-day, as in apostolic times, is applicable only to them. The working enjoined related not to what is generally known as self-reformation, nor to that understood to be embodied in the adage, "You do your part, and God will do His;" though there is a *sense* in which Christians have to do *their* part. They must do as if all depended upon them ; and yet they must work as if all depended upon God. Christianity, or rather the Christian's experience, is full of paradoxes ; this one, like all others, is best understood by Christians. But the working enjoined related to the developing of that new, that higher life which God had already given—to the strengthening, in short, of that character with more than the rudiments of which the Philippians were already familiar. What lay upon the heart of Paul with respect to the Church at Philippi, was not its deliverance from the consequences of sin (it had not been a Church, had this been the case) ; but its emancipation from sin's power, its growth in grace, its sanctification. The salvation of the Philippians was accomplished ; but their warfare was only begun. Conversion is not the extinction of the old nature ; but the reception of a new nature antagonistic to the old. Every Christian is emphatically his own antithesis. That we may approximate to our understanding of the text, let analogy be our handmaid.

I. By reference to PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT. When a child is born into the world, it comes with a life which is God-given, and which, as long as the child is spared, is God-sustained. Yet the child-man or woman needs careful nursing for a long long period of years—indeed, as long as in this world, though the nursing may not be known by that name. In the case of a child, it is true that others are the actors ; but the point is, the child must be nursed, otherwise its physical strength will never be developed. But what is called nursing,—feeding, clothing, airing, etc.,—will not develop the child's body unless

God bless these means. Here the nurse does all, and yet God does all. He were a bold man who should draw the line by saying, "Thus far the goodness of God extends, and here begin the effects of good nursing." It seems to me that men bring common sense to bear upon all matters except religion. No man troubles himself as to how far he has to thank God and how far himself for the crop of grass in his meadow; and yet volumes have been written to show the exact point at which the sovereignty of God touched the free will of man. Egregious folly! Then again, with respect to locomotion. *Desire* to walk is God-given; but *ability* to walk comes not unless desire be acted upon. A child would never walk unless it had the desire. Desire to walk on the part of a child, without any attempt at walking, would never develop its limbs or perfect its locomotive powers; nor would desire and attempt combined, were God to paralyze its limbs. We can think of the matter on this wise: the Lord says to the child, "I have given thee limbs and locomotive desires; these limbs can be developed, these desires can become powers, only by being used, only by being acted upon." The child says, "Because Thou hast given me locomotive desires and limbs, I will act upon those desires, I will try to walk; I will work out what Thou hast worked in, and art working." The child works in walking because God works. God works in developing, because the child works. He who says, "God and I shall accomplish so and so," is not, in my opinion, an irreverent man.

II. BY REFERENCE TO MENTAL DEVELOPMENT. Given first, latent intelligence; for no man can *give* intellect or take it unto himself, then work out what God has worked in. All philosophers were once not only childlike but childish. There never was a Newton at two years old. I know, indeed, that knowledge is a question of accretion; but great knowledge is a question of mental compass; and mental compass, to some extent, is a question of development *through severe discipline*. "A melon is a work of art." To a very considerable extent, so is a man. What mean the frequent references to the "genius of

industry" which we hear? This, or *nothing*, that a man may make himself great. At the same time, no amount of mental drill, were the tender mercies of the Lord withdrawn, would issue in a powerful and cultivated mind; nor will God give a cultivated mind to him who does not apply himself to study. Alike in mental and physical development the proverb stands good, that "God helps those that help themselves." Indeed, it is one of universal scope and application. The mental and the manual labourer alike, in each effort of head or of hand, works out only what God works in; and each separate "working" strengthens, develops up to a given point, his mental or physical powers. *Up to a given point*, for there is to physical power a grand climacteric, and there may be to *mental*.

Now consider the "work" of the Christian. Christianity is a bias Christ-ward. Bias admits of degrees, hence the possibility of "working." If it be asked, *Why* have not all men this bias? I answer, Let no man rashly conclude that he has it not, lest he charge God foolishly and make Him responsible for sin. If it be asked, *When* has a man this bias? I answer, Whenever he is dissatisfied with self and feels a *sincere desire* to live God-ward. If it be asked, *Why* so few live to God, though in a sense persuaded they should? I answer, The intellect may be enlightened when the conscience is not, but it is better to *do* than to hair-split; power to do comes in trying to do. I answer, secondly, Because there is so much cant talked about "laying your deadly *doings* down," etc., that men are afraid to turn from their sins in case of perpetrating a self-righteous act. And, thirdly, Because men want to be *saints* before being babes in Christ—want "experience," "assurance," etc. What experience has an infant? I should not say a man was not a Christian on the ground solely that he had not assurance; I should say he lacked experience; as we get that, we get assurance. No man becomes a saint in a night, though he may be born *out* of the world in the twinkling of an eye. When a man is so born, he enters upon a new phase of existence. The life "more abun-

dant" is God-given and God-sustained; but never is sustained unless men work, unless they take spiritual food, water, exercise, and air. As in the development of physical and mental power man has his part to play, though God does all, so too here. Otherwise there were no occasion for "fear and trembling." It is true that our mental powers may be strengthened by the thinking of evil thoughts, by the pursuit of unworthy studies. Our physical powers may be developed by the doing of wicked deeds; but the fact does not interfere with my analogy. God "wills" not that either power shall be developed by a process or exercise inherently good; but simply that both shall be developed by exercise. Were it not so, men could never be *great* in wickedness. That it is so, shows that man is a free agent; and God a patient God. It is God's "good pleasure" that mind and body grow by being exercised. We are converted once for all, and yet every day, if we are *growing* Christians, growth in grace is continuous conversion, as continued existence is continuous creation. The *Christian* has to turn daily from sin, as the *animal* man has to turn daily to food. This turning from sin, which of course includes turning to God, is the Christian's duty—privilege, if you like; and in the doing of this he is to "fear and tremble." First, lest he think his sanctification, and consequently his *salvation to the uttermost*, can be accomplished without use of means; second, lest he use the means without having regard to the end to be accomplished.

But it is important to notice that, in order to co-operation with God, we must work in His appointed way. Whether a Christian may forget his privileges or duties and become a castaway, is not at present to the point. That we are upon a slippery, inclined plane is matter of fact and of experience; and the injunction is, Climb up; not, Take care that you do not slide down. Instead of attending to the practicable, we are ever bothering about the speculative. Climb up, and do it in harmony with the laws of spiritual growth. We pay nothing for physical life nor for our souls' salvation; but we pay in pocket and in *person* for life's maintenance; we pay in

both for mental development, not for brains; and through many severe soul struggles is our sanctification accomplished. To grow in soul, we must strive against evil, "cease from it, learn to do well." This is soul struggle, but soul strength is needful to this. Make diligent use then of all means of grace—prayer, Bible reading, attendance upon ordinances, remembering that all these are means to an end. And be encouraged in this diligent use, for "God worketh in you." When you avail yourself of "means of grace," believe God has enabled you so to do, and that, as you have been put on your knees or sent to your Bible by Him, He will bless these exercises to your soul. I have spoken of obedience to spiritual laws; rather by obedience to God. Work out by obedience what God has worked in; and be assured of this, you shall succeed, for God worketh in you to will and to do; you shall succeed, not up to a given point only, but in attaining to daily increase in likeness to Christ. There is no grand climacteric to growth in grace here, nor, possibly, hereafter. Stars differ in glory; but "fear and tremble" lest you vex the Spirit by partial non-compliance with His will; "fear and tremble" as you think of your own weakness and unworthiness, and as you remember that God works arbitrarily, not necessarily.

Mind and body must have food, and each must have its own food; so soul growth cannot be without soul food, without spiritual exercise, water, air. When we want mental or bodily food, we go where it can be had. Let us do likewise with respect to spiritual food. Let us take our bias Christward; our convictions, our needs, our all, to God in Jesus' name continually. To do this is to "work out our own salvation."

J. S. SWAN.

Buying the Truth.

"BUY THE TRUTH, AND SELL IT NOT."—*Prov. xxiii. 23.*



RUTH, in one sense, is essentially free. If firm as the rock, it is also fluent as the water, elastic as the air. It belongs to no man, it is the common inheritance of all minds: as soon as we possess it, we are bound to share

it, to make others partakers of like precious treasure; we must "pass it on, like bread at Sacrament." If he is a true benefactor who makes two blades of grass to grow in the soil where only one grew before, he is a truer friend who causes pure and holy thoughts to grow in the mind which before was barren of good or productive of evil.

But our text invites us to look at the "other side of the shield," to observe that there are cases and conditions in which truth has to be paid for, has its own price is something which we are willing at great cost "to buy." There is,—

I. THE TRUTH FOR WHICH WE INVOLUNTARILY PAY A GREAT PRICE. We go out into the world with crude, ill-digested notions of men and things; and these have to undergo correction, sometimes have to be entirely exchanged. To effect this, we have to pay the price of a suffering experience. We have all to "buy the truth" about (1) *The chequered character of our human life*. Many well-meant voices warn us that life will prove an admixture of good and evil, that it will not always wear the roseate hue it has in youth, that many things will grow tame and common-place, that we shall make mistakes and fall into errors which will land us in perplexities and anxieties and even serious distresses. We admit it all, but in our hearts we do not believe it. Hope is high and our purpose strong. We are going to be exceptionally wise, and shall avoid the blunders we see others make. Life, we think, will prove to be a very cheery, successful thing to us; and there will be just as much cloud in the sky as we shall want for the shade it will throw. Then we go on and go out into the battle, and we do fail; we do err and stumble; we do fall into difficulties and distresses; and we come to *know*,—what we at first only admitted but did not in truth believe,—that "this world is to all a stiffish soil," that human life is a very chequered thing. We reach the truth; but we have had to "*buy*" it. We have had to "buy the truth" about (2) *The imperfections of the good*. We are apt to start with the ingenuous belief that bad men are wholly bad, and good men wholly good. We expect the best from those who profess to be good men and pro-

pose to do good things. Then, by cruel experience we have to learn that not only are there those that make profession of worth who are destitute of all principle, but that men substantially good and true may be overpowered by temptation and fall into a sinful act, or even into a sinful course of action; and that very excellent men and women allow themselves some such serious defect as passionateness, or inconstancy, or inconsiderateness—that, in fact, “the best of men are but men at the best,” and that even beautiful Christian life is as much an endeavour as a possession. We have to “buy the truth” respecting (3) *The strength or weakness of our own character*. We have the most fixed intention to walk straight on, without swerving in the path of holiness and wisdom; then the dark hour comes, and the mastering opportunity, and we find that we too have urgent need of the mercy of God and the generous judgment of our fellows. We learn this truth at the heavy cost of failure, and vexation, and self-reproach. Again, we buy (4) *The comforting truth for the time of sorrow*. We may well wish to be able to speak the word of consolation in the ear of sorrow. There is no office more Divine than that of a true comforter; there is no art more enviable than that of “raising up them that be bowed down” in spirit. And it is not tuition, but discipline, that will teach us this. The wisdom which binds up the broken heart and heals its wounds, is not gained from the volumes in our library, but from the darker experiences of our life. “As well might those on the hither side of mortality instruct the souls gone beyond the veil, as souls outside a great affliction guide these who are struggling in it: that is a mighty baptism, and only Christ can go down with us into these waters”—only He and those who, like Him, have *been touched with a feeling of the infirmities* of those whom they seek to succour. The truth which makes a tender heart, not helpless, but helpful in the presence of human sorrow, can only be gained by troublous experiences. It must be bought at a great price.

II. THE TRUTH FOR WHICH WE VOLUNTARILY PAY THE PRICE WHICH GOD HAS ATTACHED TO IT. By the conditions under

which we find ourselves placed, we are practically invited to purchase some precious truth at a certain cost to ourselves; thus, we might have (1) *More knowledge of God's mind, at the price of more serious study of His word.* It is evident that some of the good and wise have a much more intelligent view of the ways of God and His relation to us in Christ Jesus than others have. These are they who not only observe, but investigate,—who not only look *on to*, but, like the angels, look *into* these things. These are they who do not content themselves with a loose and fragmentary reading of the Bible, and a careless catching up of fugitive contributions in magazines, and a rhetorical display in the pulpit; but who *study* the living word with intelligence, read the best works of the wisest men, and come up to the sanctuary to “see the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple.” They who would “understand the lovingkindness of the Lord” and know the deeper things of Him, must pay the price of knowledge, viz., mental effort, thoughtfulness, sustained attention, study; they must “*buy* the truth.” Again, we might have (2) *More of the blessedness of religion at the price of more obedience and sacrifice.* “I do not think,” says a sagacious observer of our time, “that Christian happiness as such . . . is one thousandth part as common as it ought to be, considering what the promises of God to men are.” These promises are very great, and Christian men generally “seem to come short of them.” The common experience of good men makes the language they quote from Scripture appear extravagant. There is not enough of blessedness in our daily Christian life and in our regular Christian work. Why? Because we do not fulfil the conditions which are attached to it. We do not throw our heart into what we do. We touch daintily with the tips of our fingers what we should grasp resolutely with the right hand of our power. If we would pay the price of ardour in devotion and steadfast zeal in spiritual activity, we should understand the truth, not in disappointing fractions, but in satisfying fulness, that in keeping God's commandment there is great reward—that

God's law is our delight—that, believing in Him whom we have not seen, but whom we love, we rejoice with unspeakable joy—that it is more blessed to give than to receive. If we buy any truth of God by cheerfully fulfilling the conditions He has imposed, we shall not want to sell what we have bought; we shall find that what we gain represents immeasurably more than what we have given. What we give to God in cheerful self-surrender, He gives us back a thousand-fold in reviving truth, in abiding peace, in the joy which no man taketh from us.

WILLIAM CLARKSON, B.A.

Salisbury.

David's Charge to Solomon.

"AND THOU, SOLOMON MY SON, KNOW THOU THE GOD OF THY FATHER, AND SERVE HIM WITH A PERFECT HEART AND WITH A WILLING MIND : FOR THE LORD SEARCHETH ALL HEARTS, AND UNDERSTANDETH ALL THE IMAGINATIONS OF THE THOUGHTS : IF THOU SEEK HIM, HE WILL BE FOUND OF THEE ; BUT IF THOU FORSAKE HIM, HE WILL CAST THEE OFF FOR EVER."—1 *Chron.* xxviii. 9.

THESE words were addressed by the parent-king, verging on the confines of another world, to his son and successor. They teach us that, although a hundred and one important matters might have claimed the attention of the dying monarch, yet to none of them is there a shadow of a reference made, but to the all-important subject of the moral state of the heart. Lay down a firm moral basis, and the throne will stand, the kingdom will prosper, and the mantle of Heaven will protect. The demolition of kingdoms, what a chapter! What brought them to the ground? The want of laws, resources, philosophy, philanthropy, warlike spirit? No; *corruption*.

I. THE FOUNDATIONS OF A RELIGIOUS LIFE. "Know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind." The most magnificent temple the world ever witnessed was to be erected, and in that temple the most splendid ritual was to be performed, as the outcome, not the root, of religion in the mind and heart of man. 1. *A knowledge of God*. "Know Thou the God of thy father." References to this subject are frequent in the Bible; we

will quote two passages only. "Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches : but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth : for in these things I delight, saith the Lord " (Jer. ix. 23, 24). "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent " (John xvii. 3). This knowledge is not a mere abstract conception of a distant Being, but a burning memory of the Friend of the family. David left to Solomon a prosperous kingdom, an established throne, and untold treasures ; but the great family heirloom was his God. You may leave to your children wealth, position, and a loving remembrance of yourself ; but see that you leave God to the family. We love God as the intimate Friend and Helper of our fathers. 2. *A dedication of ourselves to His service.* "And serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind." Two essential characteristics are mentioned—sincerity and readiness. One relates to our condition, the other to action. Creeds and forms are under scrutiny. Men are jealous of a particular set of religious opinions. When you have any ailment, your medical attendant does not examine your hat, coat, waistcoat, shoes, etc., but your lungs and your heart. Let all Christians be first jealous of the sincerity and purity of their sect. Readiness, and not reluctance. The Saviour of the world is our example ; He came to serve, and not to be served. Some servants are continually asking their masters what to do ; others see so much to do that they have no time for asking. Paul only asked once, "What must I do ?" ever after, he engaged in the work. A stream of electricity may make a dead animal move its limbs, but a living one moves without the aid of a machine. The ministry of the word, when it only touches the outward sensibilities of the people, is only a machinery, and not a living form. Conformity to religious usages may be of service, but let us meet the first demand, "My Son, give Me thine heart."

II. THE SAFEGUARDS OF A RELIGIOUS LIFE. "For the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts." 1. *A consciousness of the Divine presence in the heart.* "For the Lord searcheth all hearts." Let not this be understood as a threat, but a loving assurance that He whose work is everywhere perfect is at work in our hearts. The heart is, "desperately wicked." Let God examine it, and spread abroad His love within it. No one but God knows how sin affects the heart; He only can remove sin from the heart. Fear not the examination and the operation, for He is sent "to bind the broken hearted." It will be performed with a gentle, loving hand. Why do men reject the Gospel? Among other reasons, they shrink from its heart-searching truths. What God finds in the heart will not be exposed, but buried; what He plants there will be seen, The bold and manly prayer of the Psalmist be ours, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24). 2. *A consciousness of the Divine omniscience prevents evil thoughts.* "And understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts." Imaginations are the impurities of thought. The wild branches absorb the sap of the tree, and the fruit is dwarfed. The religious life of a man begins, grows, and ends in his thoughts. "Vain thoughts," are the excrescences of real thoughts. Men are least careful about their thoughts. This vine, of God's planting, is allowed to grow wild. Images of thought! There is no idolatry so prolific as that of thought. The pantheon of thought, what a number of idols! But real life is a different form. Thoughts compatible with the existence of God and the duty of man enter the arena of real life. Nothing but the ever presence of the Eternal Mind will put down the idolatry of thought. Read the first part of the 139th Psalm. "Christ in you, the hope of glory." The great stronghold of religion is consciousness.

III. THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF A RELIGIOUS LIFE. "If thou seek Him, He will be found of thee." 1. *In every department of life*

man is a seeker. Without seeking, what does he find? A bare existence. The treasures of life can only be found out by seeking. The more the value the greater is the secresy. The dust is blown in your face, but coals are lodged in the coffers of the earth. Seekers of knowledge, of discovery, of invention, of religion, have all been rewarded. Is genuine piety the most superficial of all? Nay. "Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near." All the week men seek worldly wisdom, commercial success; on the Sunday they come to church for ease. Is it a wonder that they are lean? "Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God" (Prov. ii. 3, 4, 5). Christ seeks men, and men must seek Christ. The whole of the Gospel is a seeking after the sinner; and the whole of godliness is a seeking after God.

2. *In the department of spiritual life our gain is the greatest.* We find God here. We reach beyond all streams to the fountain. This is an age in which the essence of substances is offered to the public. Would you have the essence of truth, of light, of moral beauty? Then seek God, and you will find that essence. "Whom have I in heaven but Thee," etc. "This God shall be our God for ever and ever." Our greatest finding is a loving Father reconciled unto us through the Saviour.

IV. THE WARNING OF A RELIGIOUS LIFE. "But if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off for ever." We see abandoned characters every day. This is a fearful thought. The eloquence of the pulpit, the earnestness of the throne of grace, the intercession of Jesus, avail nothing.

1. *The sinner forsakes first.* Describe the process. 2. *God next.* Speak of the doom and the judgment. These words were addressed, by David to youthful Solomon. Try the advice to the young of your congregation.

T. D.

"The Power of Prayer."

"PETER WENT UP UPON THE ROOFTOP TO PRAY ABOUT THE SIXTH HOUR: . . . AND CORNELIUS SAID, FOUR DAYS AGO I WAS FASTING UNTIL THIS HOUR; AND AT THE NINTH HOUR I PRAYED IN MY HOUSE."—*Acts x. 9-30.*



CÆSAREA should be specially dear to us. Here the good Cornelius dwelt. Here Peter preached the gospel to him and to his kinsmen and near friends. Here the first-fruits of the Gentiles were gathered in, and from this, as from a centre, the glad news was carried to the ends of the earth.

Another thing that gives interest to Cæsarea is, that it witnesses to the power of prayer. This we shall endeavour to illustrate. The story of Cornelius shows,—

I. THAT PRAYER IS A CHARACTERISTIC OF THE GODLY.

There were great differences between Peter and Cornelius. The one was a Jew, and the other a Gentile. The one was a believer in Jesus, and the other knew only the religion of Moses. But in spirit they were one. Both were men of prayer. This holds true of the good in all ages and dispensations. In proof, mark *the testimony of Scripture, the biographies of pious men, and the records of Christian Work.*

II. PRAYER CONDUCTS TO PROGRESS IN THE DIVINE LIFE.

Peter and Cornelius both witness to this, for to both God, in answer to prayer, revealed hidden truths, and gave more light and freedom and joy.

First: *Prayer prepares the heart for the reception of higher truths.* Thus we rise above the earthly and the sensual, to converse with the divine. With childlike spirit we wait upon God. There is both humility and aspiration. The cry is, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust, quicken Thou me, according to Thy Word" (Ps. cxix. 25).

Secondly: *Prayer harmonizes with God's laws as to spiritual progress.* God has ordained that they who ask shall receive. It is to him that hath and useth what he hath that more is given. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength" (Ps. xl. 31).

Thirdly: *Prayer secures the help of the Holy Spirit.* "If

ye who are evil," etc. "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities" (Rom. viii. 26).

Day by day, if we are true to the light that is in us, and pray to God, He will give us more light. We may have to give up things we once held dear, and have to suffer loss and contumely, but our progress shall be sure. Show me a man who, like Cornelius, prays always, and is actively benevolent and true, and of such you may surely say, "that his path shall be like the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

III. PRAYER BRINGS TOGETHER INTO CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP PERSONS THAT HAVE BEEN SEPARATED. Pride, custom, prejudice, sectarianism, and such-like things keep many good men apart. But prayer works against all these. In its purest form it is the ally of God, and helps to bring all His children to be of one mind and of one spirit. Once, Peter held aloof from Cornelius. He belonged to the class of the "unclean." It seemed impossible that he, and such as he, could ever be put on an equality with the Jews, or admitted with them, on the same terms, into the Christian Church. But prayer helped to cleanse his mind of these errors (vv. 34, 35).

Into what a glorious fellowship do we enter when we pray! Christianity is wider than our little systems and Churches. Blessed be God, we have had beautiful evidences of this in these last days. Moved by a power from on high, men of all sections of the Church have felt impelled to seek a closer intimacy, and have rejoiced to come together for prayer and for Christian work.

IV. PRAYER UNITES ALL TRUE HEARTS IN THE SERVICE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The great end of prayer is to bring us to be of the same mind with God. Its spirit is, "Thy will be done." Now we know it is God's will that Christ should be King over all the earth.

Oh, let us pray more, more often, more earnestly, more unitedly. Let us enter more into the communion of saints, saying, "Our Father, which art in Heaven, . . . Thy

Kingdom come." Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, Matt. xviii. 19. Prayer and work should go together. Thus all true hearts will glow with the same love; and gladly spend and be spent for the same Master.

"The saint beside the ocean prayed,
The soldier in his chosen bower,
Where all his eye surveyed
Seemed sacred in that hour.
To each unknown his brother's prayer,
Yet brethren true in dearest love
Were they, and now they share
Fraternal joys above."—*Keble.*

Abernethy.

WILLIAM FORSYTH, M.A.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

The Two Grand Types of Character.

"AND AS WE HAVE BORNE THE IMAGE OF THE EARTHY, WE SHALL ALSO BEAR THE IMAGE OF THE HEAVENLY."—1 Cor. xv. 49.

THE words suggest:—

I. That man has set before him TWO MORAL IMAGES OR TYPES OF CHARACTER. The "earthy" and the "heavenly." These two are essentially distinct, in the spring and sphere of their activities.

First: The one is practically *sensuous*, the other *spiritual*. The earthy man is material (1) In his views of *happiness*. All his pleasures are of a sensuous order. (2) In his views of *wealth*. He knows of no man that is rich, but he who possesses worldly property. (3) In his views of

dignity. The only honourable man, to him, is he who occupies the highest worldly position, and who moves in the mere pageantry that dazzles the sensual eye. He is, in one word, a man of the flesh. He sees only the fleshly, appreciates only the fleshly, enjoys only the fleshly. On the contrary, the other is *spiritual*. He lives behind the visible phenomena, realizes the spiritual, the eternal. To him the invisible is the only reality, moral excellence the only wealth and dignity. Though in the world, he is not "of the world." He has his citizenship in heaven.

Secondly: The one is practically *selfish*, the other is *benevolent*. The earthy man is controlled in everything by a

regard to his own pleasures and aggrandizements. Self is the centre and the circumference of all his activities; at once the lord of his faculties and the god of his worship. All outside of himself,—even the universe itself,—he values so far and no farther than as it serves him. On the contrary, the heavenly man is *benevolent*. The social element within him controls the egoistic. His personal feelings are submerged in the ever-rising seas of sympathy with humanity and God. Like Christ, he pleases not himself; and like Paul, he would be “accursed” to help others.

Thirdly: The one is practically *atheistic*, the other is *godly*. The earthly man sees nothing but natural law, order, etc. God is not in all his thoughts. The universe to him is only either an eternal or a self-produced and self-regulating machine, a house that either has never had a builder or whose builder has deserted it. The other—the heavenly man, sees God in all. Like David, sets Him always before him; like Enoch, walks ever with Him.

Such are the two images, or types of character, that are set before every man. The words suggest,—

II. That man DOES BEAR THE ONE, HE *should* BEAR THE OTHER. Account for it how you like, every man, in the first stages of his life, bears the

image of the “earthly.” He is sensual, selfish, godless. This fact, which is too obvious to need or even to justify illustration, is at once the crime and the calamity of the race. But whilst we *do* bear this image at first, we should strive to bear the other. “We *should* also” (or, as Dr. Davidson renders it, “let us also”) “bear the image of the heavenly.” Let us do it,—

First: Because it is *right*. This heavenly image, embodying the reigning elements, realizes the soul’s highest ideal of excellence. It is just that for which we unconsciously hunger and for which we shall hunger for ever unless we get it. Let us do it,—

Secondly: Because it is *practicable*. (1) We have the model in its most imitable form. Christ is the model. He was pre-eminently spiritual, benevolent, godly; and never was there a character more *imitable* than Christ’s: the most admirable, the most transparent, and the most unchangeable. We can never imitate a character that we cannot understand, admire, and find always the same. Christ was all this. (2) We have the means in the most effective forms. The Gospel reveals the model, supplies the motives, and pledges the spiritual influences of heaven. Let us do it,—

Thirdly: Because it is *urgent*. To do this, is the grand

mission of life. Unless this work is fulfilled, our existence becomes a failure and a curse. To pass from the "earthly" to the "heavenly," is to pass from darkness to light, from sin to holiness, from Satan to God, from Pandemonium to Paradise.

CONCLUSION:—Here is a *test of character*. Conventional evangelicism concludes that all who adopt certain tenets, join certain sects, and attend to certain religious ordinances are of the heavenly type and fold. A tremendous mistake is this! Without uncharitableness it must be confessed that the vast majority of what are called Churches bear the image of the earthly; they are selfish, sensuous, and practically Godless. Here also is a *guide for preachers*. Unless you get men from the earthly to the heavenly type of life, what boots your sermons, with all their ratiocination and rhetoric? Get their souls out of the earthly into the heavenly, and in the heavenly go on building up a character suited to the higher hierarchies of being.

"So build we up the being that
we are,
Thus drinking in the soul of
things,
We shall be wise perforce; and
while inspired
By choice, and conscious that the
will is free,
Unswerving shall we move, as if
impelled
By strict necessity along the path

Of order and of good. What-
e'er we see,
Whate'er we feel, by agency di-
rect
Or indirect, shall tend to feed
and nurse
Our faculties, shall fix in calmer
seats
Of moral strength, and raise to
loftier heights
Of love divine, our intellectual
soul." Wordsworth.

Mystery.

"THE MYSTERY OF GOD,"—Col.
ii. 2.

THERE are two kinds of mystery, the *absolute* and the *relative*; that which is essentially incomprehensible to all created minds, and that which, though incomprehensible to one order of mind at one period of mental life, is understood at another. In the latter sense the word mystery is often used in the New Testament. The Gospel dispensation was a mystery before its revelation. In this last sense it embraces a mighty universe of subjects that now lie in haze. The known, even to the knowable, is to the most intelligent creature in the spiritual creation as an atom to the Andes, a rain-drop to the ocean. But the unknowable is as fathomless as infinity itself. We offer the following remarks concerning mystery.

I. IT IS ABSOLUTELY AND FOR EVER UNAVOIDABLE. I think it is Sir William Hamilton who has said that the whole course of human investigation is from

the known to the unknown. An old writer has somewhere remarked, that the whole sum of creature knowledge is but one drop taken up by the vessel of the intellect from an immeasurable ocean.

Mystery is an eternal necessity. The highest seraph has his mysteries as well as the human student in the first stages of inquiry. Eternity will have its mysteries as well as time. The whole universe floats on the sea of mystery. "Wearied," says Augustine, "with my vain attempts to explain one of the mysteries of Scripture, I took a walk by the sea-shore to refresh my exhausted spirits with the sight of the ocean, its sands and its billows. I met a lively boy carrying water from the sea to fill a pool he had dug in the sand. Inquiring what he was about, he replied, 'emptying the ocean into my pool.' Such was I, attempting to exhaust the things of God into my receiver." Another remark which we offer in connection with mystery is,—

II. IT IS ESSENTIAL TO THE DISCIPLINE OF CREATED MINDS.

First: *It affords stimulus to inquiry.* Were it possible for any created mind to reach a perfect knowledge of all things, it would reach a point where its impulses to thought would expire; and with the extinction of those impulses the spirit would sink into stagnation and death. But it is not so.

The field for inquiry is infinite. When one hill is scaled, a higher and more attractive one lies in front. When one landscape has been surveyed, another, wider and grander, opens up to the vision, and thus on for ever. Activity is essential to the well-being of spirit; and mystery alone can secure a perpetuation of this.

Secondly: *It overcomes all egotism.* Pride and self-sufficiency are essentially incompatible with the progress of the spirit in moral excellence and greatness and satisfaction. As a man loses his egotism in the presence of the majestic in nature, so the soul loses itself in the presence of the everlasting mountains of mystery that crowd around it, shut it in, and darken its very heavens. Another remark which we offer concerning mystery is,—

III. IT IS NECESSARY TO ALL THE HIGHER ELEMENTS OF OUR NATURE. The highest happiness of the soul is in *wonder* and *worship*; but in the absence of mystery, how could there be wonder? how could there be worship? Should science ever translate the universe into intelligible propositions, it would lose its poetry, lose all those mystic forces with which it stirs the inmost heart with sublime reverence and adoring wonder. There can be no religion without mystery. God is mystery, and a comprehensible God is

no God. "Canst thou by searching find out God, and canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth and broader than the sea."

"In the meditation of Divine mysteries, keep thy heart humble and thy thoughts holy: let philosophy not be ashamed to be confuted, nor logic blush to be confounded; what thou canst not prove, approve; what thou canst not comprehend, believe; and what thou canst believe admire; so shall thy ignorance be satisfied in thy faith, and thy doubts swallowed up with wonders. The best way to see daylight, is to put out the candle."

Pulpits Sinking into Popular Contempt.

"THEREFORE HAVE I ALSO MADE YOU CONTEMPTIBLE AND BASE BEFORE ALL THE PEOPLE."—*Mal. ii. 9.*

THUS the priesthood of Israel was distinctly doomed to sink into popular contempt. No greater calamity could happen to a community than this.

I. This is a calamity TO ALL PARTIES. It is most disastrous (1) To the priests. Few things are more painful to man than social contempt. Social contempt divests a man of esteem, confidence, and influence. It

is most disastrous (2) To the community. The highest educational instrumentality in a country is that which religious ministers are appointed to employ. Their work is to teach, rebuke, reprove, exhort, etc., and in every way to cultivate the spiritual natures of their contemporaries. But when they become *socially contemptible*, they are stripped of all power for this; the hearts of the people recoil from them with disgust. A greater calamity for England I know not than the sinking of its pulpit into popular contempt.

II. This is a calamity to which the RELIGIOUS MINISTRY IS LIABLE. There are moral elements at work amongst the clergy of all denominations which have a tendency to bring about this lamentable state of things. (1) There is *ignorance*. The preacher who reveals to his congregation his ignorance of the rudiments of science, the laws of language, and the laws of thought, and, above all, of the teachings of Christ, exposes himself to this terrible result. (2) There is *greed*. The man who professes, as every Christian minister does profess, to be the apostle of heavenly disinterestedness, and who in his life and conversation is manifestly controlled by greed and the love of "filthy lucre," must become contemptible. The man professing to be the minister of Him who made

Himself of no reputation and who had nowhere to lay His head, and living at the same time in worldly opulence and moving amongst his contemporaries in ecclesiastical splendour, is a man who can scarcely fail to excite in the minds of the population a feeling of scorn and contempt. (3) There is *bigotry*. He who, professing to be the minister of universal love and charity, is so intolerant as to damn all men who do not believe in his own tenets and adhere to his own policy, must necessarily pass into social contempt. (4) There is *sycophancy*. When the minister of a religion which enforces invincible honesty and manly independency is seen toadying to the little magnates of his country and neighbourhood, all true men look at him with sovereign disgust.

III. This is a calamity THAT IS MANIFESTLY TRANSPIRING IN OUR COUNTRY. The decrease in the numbers of those who attend churches, compared with the increase of the population; the growth of a literature in thorough antagonism to the spirit and aims of Christianity; and the fact that the great bulk of the reading and thinking men of England stand aloof from all Churches, plainly show that the pulpit of England is sinking into popular contempt. Primate and prelates and preachers are treated with ridicule in nearly all popular literature

and scientific discussion. A more terrible sign of the times know I not than this. The "salt" of the pulpit has lost its savour and it is being trodden under foot with disdain and contempt. Trodden under foot by our *littérateurs*, scientists, artisans, tradesmen, and merchants. Gracious Heaven, raise up men for our pulpits so high in culture, so gifted in faculty, so Christly in love, so invincible in duty, so independent in action, as shall not only counteract the rapid tendency to ruin, but shall attract to it with reverence the interests of the age!

The Rod of Moses: The Emblem of Power and Faith.

"TO-MORROW I WILL STAND ON THE TOP OF THE HILL WITH THE ROD OF GOD IN MY HAND."—*Exod.* xvii. 9.

I. The rod served to *join* man and God in the work of the Lord. Moses takes hold of one end, God the other. This end is Faith, that end is Almighty Power. All means are established for this purpose—to bridge the chasm between God and man. Faith cannot act without a medium; God does not act without faith.

II. The rod served to *inspire* the confidence of the people in their God. The rod had a history. In Egypt, at the Red Sea, and just now at Horeb, when the people

saw Moses taking the rod in his hand, they felt encouraged. Success everywhere attended the rod. Look at the word of God, the cross of Calvary, the throne of grace. Take up the prophet's mantle and smite the river. The courage of the people did not fail them in their fight with Amaleck, because of the rod.

III. The rod served to teach the people *dependence* upon God for their success in battle. They were warriors, but they undertook to fight the enemy in the power of God. Instance David and Goliath, "Not by might nor by power," etc.

IV. The rod served to teach the people the need of *holy* and *devout* men. Some might have thought that the better plan would have been for Moses, Aaron, and Hur to take a sword apiece and join the army. Not so. Ministers of God are sometimes blamed because they do not throw themselves into the turmoil of business. That man is in his study holding up the rod of prayer while you fight with the world.

T. D.

Notes on the Apostles' Creed.—4. "Jesus Christ, His only Son."

"THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON."—*John* i. 18.

We may well ask three questions about the Divine Sonship of Jesus Christ.

I. IN WHAT DOES IT CONSIST? Clearly He uses the words, "Son of God" of Himself in more than the *universal* sense — otherwise, since all men are the "offspring" of God, this would not mark Him as "only-begotten"; so also may it be said of the *theocratic* sense, in which all Hebrews were sons of God, and of the *ethical* sense, in which all the godly are. The expressions about Christ's sonship claim for Him a uniqueness, a solitariness in that relationship. He has ties and connection with God that are unshared; for He is "the well-beloved," "the only-begotten," *the* Son of God. His Sonship to God indicates — (1) A oneness of *Nature*. He shares with God (a) The incommunicable essence of Deity. "The fulness of the Godhead" (β) Eternity of existence; being "before Abraham," and "giving eternal life." (2) A oneness of *Character*. In motive, righteousness, love, He is identical with the Father. He and the Father are one.

II. HOW IS IT KNOWN?

(1) From *Scripture* generally. The Psalms declare, "Thou art My Son," the Prophets predict Him, — Isaiah, as the Child who is also Everlasting Father; Daniel, as Son of Man, who is Ancient of Days; Ezekiel, as the Human Figure controlling the wheels of human history; the Gospels, in

their recorded testimonies of friends and foes; the Epistles—notably John's and Paul's and Peter's; and the Revelation, culminating the whole by a vision of the Lamb on the throne. (2) From His *Self-Revelation*. (a) His own *claims*, in defence of which He died; and in which He said He was not only greater than David, Solomon, and Jonah, and older than Abraham, superior to angels, only Saviour and Prince of all men; but plainly taught that He only knows the Father, and is alone known by the Father. (β) His *works*. As Ulysses made himself known by bending in his old home the strong bow he alone could bend, Christ made Nature yield to Him,—the water, the bread, the fish, the storm, disease, and death,—so revealing Himself by a manifestation of Divine ownership none beside could claim. (γ) His *Character*. Since He was perfect in purity and righteousness and love, and since men must worship perfection, He is of necessity Divine, for only the Divine must be worshipped. What God can be diviner than He whose life is in the gospels?

III. WHAT SHOULD BE THE RESULT ON MEN? If true, it is the most stupendous, and ought to be the most influential of all facts. It must lead us to—(1) *Honour* Him. Rightly the "Te Deum" sings,

"We praise Thee as God." He is the Priest, but Royal Priest, to receive our homage as did Melchisedec; the Lamb, but Lamb on the throne, to be adored. (2) *Obey* Him. His precepts and claims and example should not only fascinate us with the beauty of their moral perfections, but compel our loyalty and imitation, because of their Divine authority. (3) *Trust* Him. Because He is "the only-begotten Son," He is—(a) *The Infallible Teacher*, and we may trust Him for all truth; (β) *The Infinite Sacrifice*, and we may trust Him for all merit; (γ) *The Omnipotent Helper*, and we may trust Him for all aid.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

Notes on the Apostles' Creed.—5. "Our Lord."

"YE CALL ME . . . LORD :
AND YE SAY WELL ; FOR SO I AM."
—John xiii. 13.

THE word "Lord," which is applied to Jehovah Himself, is a word full of authority, and radiates with control. We notice now the two grounds of our Saviour's Lordship, and find them to consist,—

I. IN HIS NATURE. And without anticipating too much of the succeeding teaching of the Creed, we necessarily ponder, now, that that Lordship is based on

His twofold nature. (1) *The Divine*. (All we have already noted about the unique, solitary sonship of God to Christ bears on this point.) (2) *The Human*. He is the Head of the Human Race: its flower; its prince; its central sun. He is Representative, Sponsor, Redeemer, and therefore Lord of men.

II. IN HIS CHARACTER. That, apart from His Divinity, would make Him Lord; and many who theoretically deny that Divinity, are nevertheless compelled to serve Him and love Him as Lord. Among human characters His is lordly: (1) Because it is the *highest*. In the golden harvest field of the world's heroes every sheaf of character bows before His, as did the sheaves of Jacob's other sons to the sheaf of Joseph. There has been no courage, or tenderness, or sacrifice loftier than His. (2) Because it is the *completest*. It is not distinctive of one or the other half of human character—it has alike the noble and the amiable; the masculine strength and the feminine sensitiveness. (3) Because it is most *independent*. Canon Liddon shows, that though Jesus was at the confluence of three races, the Greek, the Roman, the Jew, He had no taint of either one of them. He stands sublimely above all influence of century, or climate, or clan, "The Son of Man."

III. IN HIS WORK. Summed

up in one word, His work was and is, "Redemption." Such work is to be seen in what He does (1) *For mankind*. He is Intercessor, Atonement, Conqueror. (2) *Over society*. In Canon Farrer's "Witness of History to Christ," the triple victory of Christianity over corruption, cruelty, and slavery is well sketched. And despite the imperfections of Christendom to-day, it has been the scene of a thousand material and moral victories through the teaching and spirit of the Holy Christ. (3) *In man*. There are hard-fought battles and brilliant triumphs in many secret lives. The grandest trophies of Christ are where His truth wins the allegiance of the intellect, His beauty provokes the love of the heart. Can He reign? Does He rule? Then is He not Lord? We learn lessons here about:

First: *True Lordliness*. Where is the imperial man? —Not necessarily the strongest, or richest, or most royal in birth. But (1) he who has most of the Divine nature. (2) He whose life most resembles Christ's.

"How'er it be, it seems to me
'Tis only noble to be good;
Kind hearts are more than
coronets,
And simple faith than Norman
blood."

Second: *The Unity of the Church*. Where other powers, as Mammon, Ceremony,

Heresy, Bigotry, which is worse than Heresy, usurp authority, and interweave their influence, there must be separation and schism. But where there is obedience to Christ, there will be a common Lordship, which means a common loyalty, which means a common brotherhood. As the radii of a circle are nearest each other where they are nearest the centre, so Christians are nearest each other when they are nearest Christ.

Third: *Genuine Christian Life*. Lessing's notion, that "the religion of Christ meant a religion that is founded on and embodied in Christ," is a partial truth. It is far more; it is a religion, the faith and love of whose disciples centres in Christ. It is a life that is loyal to Jesus Christ "our Lord." A life, not whose birthery only, but whose watchword is, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

CHRISTIANITY.—Embodied Christianity is the great desideratum; but it is, confessedly, a rare thing amongst us. Barren creeds, conventional formalities, and zeal far more denominational than Divine, make up, to a great extent, the Christianity of this age. The Christianity which the Church is holding out to the world in these days is something like skeletons without flesh or blood—a mere hide stuffed with bones!—dry bones! The salt has lost its savour; our religion has become tasteless. It has no pungent spiritedness. To induce people to contribute to the spread of the Gospel, missionary platforms often quote the good old aphorism, "Great is the truth, and it will prevail." But we are only deceiving ourselves, and others too, if we do not remember another aphorism equally true and profound; viz., that moral truth can only prevail over moral error by meeting it in its own form. If the errors of the world existed only in abstract theories and fine speeches, then your truth, by abstract arguments and eloquent harangues, could put it down. But errors are *concrete* things; they are not merely in the brain, on the tongue, or in the folio, but they are in the life—they are embodied. Your infidelity, your paganism, your irreligious and wrong relations, are all incarnations; they are realities in men, wrought into the very texture of their experience. If, therefore, your truth is ever to prevail over those errors, its word must become flesh and dwell amongst them. Let the Church's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth, and then its light shall so shine before men that others will see its good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven.

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts! and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths of the most vital interest and universal application.

Micah calls himself a Morasthite because he was a native of Morshethgath, a small town of Judea. He prophesied in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah, and his prophetic mission commenced soon after that of Isaiah. He was contemporary with him as well as with Hosea and Amos. His prophecies were directed to Samaria, the capital city of Israel, also to Jerusalem. Hence we find denunciations against Samaria mingled with prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem. One of his predictions, it seems, saved the life of Jeremiah, who would have been put to death for foretelling the destruction of the Temple, had not Micah foretold the same thing one hundred years before.

The book is commonly distributed into three sections: chaps. i. and ii., chaps. iii. to v., chaps. vi. and vii. Each of these opens with a summons to hear God's message, and then proceeds with expostulations and threatenings, which are succeeded by glorious promises.

His style is bold, fiery, and abrupt, and has not a little of the poetic grandeur of Isaiah. His sudden transitions from one subject to another often make his writings difficult to decipher.

MICAH.

No. CCXLVIII.

The Possibilities of Godly Men falling into great trouble.

"THEREFORE I WILL LOOK UNTO THE LORD; I WILL WAIT FOR THE GOD OF MY SALVATION: MY GOD WILL HEAR ME. REJOICE NOT AGAINST ME, O MINE ENEMY: WHEN I FALL, I SHALL ARISE; WHEN I SIT IN DARKNESS, THE LORD SHALL BE A LIGHT UNTO ME. I WILL BEAR THE INDIGNATION OF THE LORD, BECAUSE I HAVE SINNED AGAINST HIM, UNTIL HE PLEAD MY CAUSE, AND EXECUTE JUDGMENT FOR ME: HE WILL BRING ME FORTH TO THE LIGHT, AND I SHALL BEHOLD HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS."
—Micah vii. 7-9.

THE prophet, having reverted in the preceding verses of this chapter to the wickedness of his

people, which he had before depicted in most dark and dreadful colours, here proceeds to represent them in their state of captivity, reduced to repentance, and yearning for that Divine interposition which would involve the complete destruction of their enemies. I take the words as exhibiting the *possibilities of Godly men*.

I. The possibility of Godly men FALLING INTO GREAT TROUBLE. "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise." Who the enemy here referred to is, scarcely matters, whether Babylon, Edom, or some other persons or peoples. All Godly men have ever had their enemies. All who have ever endeavoured to lead a Godly life have suffered perse-

cution in some mode and measure. Three things are referred to here concerning the trouble, It was (1) a "fall." Godly men are liable to many falls—falls from health to sickness, from wealth to poverty, from social friendship to desolation; but the greatest fall is *moral*—the fall of character. To this the best of men are liable—Moses, David, Peter. The trouble was (2) a "darkness." "When I sit in darkness." Light and darkness are frequently used for prosperity and adversity. There are many things that darken the soul. Disappointment is a cloud, remorse is a cloud, despair is a cloud. Some of these clouds often mantle the mental heaven in sackcloth. Godly men are often permitted to walk in darkness and to have no light.

The words exhibit,—

II. The possibility of godly men BEING GLORIOUSLY SUSTAINED IN TROUBLE. "Therefore will I look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation," etc. The godly man has a power within him, with the Divine help, of lifting his soul above the *crushing* cares, sufferings, and sorrows of life. "Rejoice not over me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." How does he do it? First: By *looking at* God. "Therefore will I look unto the Lord." The man who fastens his eyes on the sun, becomes unconscious of the small things around him. The soul which feels God to be the grand object in its horizon can scarcely fail to be buoyant and courageous. Secondly: By *waiting upon* God, "I will wait for the God of my salvation." He

is sure to come to my deliverance; it is only a question of time, and I will wait. As the farmer in the snows and storms of winter waits for the vernal season, certain that it will come, so the godly man, in trial, waits for God's approach. Thirdly: By *trusting in* God. "My God will hear me." He has promised to do so; He has done so before; He is a prayer-hearing God. He has said, "Unto that man will I look," etc. Fourthly: By *submitting to* God. "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him." I will not repine nor rebel under my suffering; I will bow to His will, for I deserve it, as I have sinned against Him. The sufferings I endure are insignificant, compared to the sins I have committed. Fifthly: By *hoping for* God. "He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold His righteousness." "Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh with the morning."

Thus it is possible for godly men to rise in courage, and even triumph in the greatest afflictions. Down in the deepest affliction, they may look their enemies in the face and say, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall I shall arise." Though I am now down, I shall rise again.

Blessed hope!

"It whispers o'er the cradled child,
Fast locked in peaceful sleep,
Ere its pure soul is sin-beguiled,
Ere sorrow bids it weep.

It soothes the mother's ear with
hope,

Like sweet bells' silver chime,
And bodied forth the unknown
scope

Of dark, mysterious Time!

'Tis heard in manhood's risen day,
 And nerves the soul to might,
 When life shines forth with fullest ray,
 Forewarning least of night.

It speaks of noble ends to gain,
 A world to mend by love
 That tempers strength of hand
 and brain
 With softness of the dove.

It falls upon the aged ear,
 Though deaf to human voice,
 And when man's evening closes
 drear,
 It bids him still rejoice.

It tells of bliss beyond the grave,
 The parted souls to thrill—
 The guerdon of the truly brave
 Who fought the powers of ill.”

Household Words.

No. CCXLIX.

Religious Persecutors.

“THEN SHE THAT IS MINE ENEMY SHALL SEE IT, AND SHAME SHALL COVER HER WHICH SAID UNTO ME, WHERE IS THE LORD THY GOD? MINE EYES SHALL BEHOLD HER: NOW SHALL SHE BE TRODDEN DOWN AS THE MIRE OF THE STREETS.”—*Micah vii. 10.*

“And may mine enemy see it, and shame cover her who hath said to me, Where is Jehovah thy God? Mine eyes will see it: now will she be for a treading down like mire in the streets.”—*Delitzsch.*

“Although, for example, God had given up His nation to the power of its enemies, the nations of the world, on account of its sins, so that they accomplished the will of God by destroying the kingdoms of Israel and Judah and carrying away the people into exile; yet they grew proud of their own might in so doing, and did not recog-

nise themselves as instruments of punishment in the hand of the Lord, but attributed their victories to the power of their own arm, and even aimed at the destruction of Israel with scornful defiance of the living God. Thus they violated the rights of Israel, so that the Lord was obliged to conduct the contest of His people with the heathen, and secure the rights of Israel by the overthrow of the heathen power of the world.”

The words present to us a few thoughts concerning *religious persecutors.*

I. Their HUMILIATING VISION.

“Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her.” “See” what? The deliverance, the exaltation which God wrought for the victims. Few things are more painful to a malign nature than to witness the prosperity and happiness of the object of its intense aversion. Every beam of delight in the hated one falls as fire on the soul-nerves of the hater. Witness Haman and Mordecai. It is destined that every ungodly persecutor shall witness one day the happiness of the godly whom he has tormented. The songs of the martyr shall fall on the ears of the human demons that forged his chains, kindled his fires, and tortured him when living. “There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.”

Another thing in the passage presented to us concerning religious persecutors is,—

II. Their TAUNTING SPIRIT.

"Where is the Lord thy God?" Scorn is one of the leading elements in the soul of the persecutor. "My tears," said David, "have been my food day and night, while mine enemies continually say, Where is now thy God? Again, "Mine enemies reproach, saying daily unto me, Where is thy God?" Again, "Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God?" How this taunting spirit was shown in those who persecuted and put to death the Son of God! "They that passed by railed on Him, wagging their heads, and saying, "Ah, Thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save Thyself and come down from the cross." The taunting spirit is generally *malific*. It is fiendish, has in it the venom of hell. The taunting spirit is generally *haughty*. "Proud and haughty scorner is his name." The taunting spirit is generally *ignorant*. He who deals in ridicule generally lacks the power of information and argument.

Another thing in the passage suggested concerning religious persecutors is,—

III. Their **UTTER RUIN**. "Now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets." There is a God that judges on the earth, and His retributive forces are ever on the heels of crime. The blood of martyrs cries to heaven and stirs these forces to action. "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

"Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine
mountains cold.

Ev'n them who kept Thy truth
so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped
stocks and stones,
Forget not; in Thy book record
their groans
Who were Thy sheep, and in
their ancient fold,
Slain by the bloody Piedmon-
tese that rolled
Mother with infant down the
rocks, their moans
The vales redoubled to the
hills, and they
To Heaven. Their martyred blood
and ashes sow
O'er all th' Italian fields, where
still doth sway
The triple Tyrant; that from
these may grow
A hundred fold, who, having
learned Thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian
woe."—*Milton*.

—
No. CCL.

The Good Time Coming.

"IN THE DAY THAT THY WALLS ARE TO BE BUILT, IN THAT DAY SHALL THE DECREE BE FAR REMOVED. IN THAT DAY ALSO HE SHALL COME EVEN TO THEE FROM ASSYRIA, AND FROM THE FORTIFIED CITIES, AND FROM THE FORTRESS EVEN TO THE RIVER, AND FROM SEA TO SEA, AND FROM MOUNTAIN TO MOUNTAIN."—*Micah* vii. 11, 12.

THE prophet here speaks in the name of Israel, and seems to exult in the expectation of the full restoration of Jerusalem. Her walls would be rebuilt, and her scattered citizens would be gathered unto her from Assyria to Egypt, from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain. "The most natural construction," says Henderson, "is, that the decree of God respecting the political changes that were to take place was not to be confined to Babylon, but was to be extended to all the countries

round about Judea, in consequence of which great numbers would become proselytes to the Jewish faith."

The words may be used to illustrate two things concerning the *good time coming*.

I. It will be a time for REBUILDING THE RUINED. "In the day that thy walls are to be built." The walls of Jerusalem are referred to—the walls of fortification, protection, these are to be rebuilt. Daniel said that they are to be rebuilt in troublesome times. There is, however, a more important rebuilding than this—a rebuilding that is going on, and will go on, until the great moral city shall be complete.

Observe, First: The human soul is a *building*; it is a temple, a "spiritual house" reared as a residence for the Eternal, a home for the Holy Ghost to dwell in. It is "a city whose builder and maker is God." Secondly: The human soul is a building *in ruins*. The walls are broken down; its columns, arches, roof, rooms, all in ruins. Thirdly: The human soul is a building to be *rebuilt*. Christ is to be the foundation stone, etc. "Ye are built together for a habitation." This rebuilding is going on according to a plan of the Great Moral Architect; is being worked out by agents that know nothing of the plan. It will be completed one day; the top stone will be brought forth one day, with shouts of "grace, grace!" This new Jerusalem established on earth, what a magnificent city it will be. The words may be used to illustrate another thing concerning the good time coming.

II. It will be a time for RE-GATHERING THE SCATTERED. "In that day also he shall come even to thee from Assyria, and from the fortified cities, and from the fortresses even to the river, and from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain." "All," says an old writer, "that belong to the land of Israel, whithersoever dispersed and however distressed, far and wide over the face of the whole earth, shall come flocking to it again. He shall come even to thee, having liberty to return and a heart to return from Assyria, whither the ten tribes were carried away, though it lay remote from the fortified cities, and from the fortress—those strongholds in which they thought they had them fast; for when God's time comes, though Pharaoh will not let the people go, God will fetch them out with a high hand. They shall come from all the remote parts, from sea to sea, and mountain to mountain, not turning back for fear of your discouragements, but they shall go from strength to strength till they come to Zion." The human family, which Heaven intended to live as one grand brotherhood, has been riven into moral sections, antagonistic to each other, and scattered all over the world. The time will come when they shall be gathered together, not, of course, in a local sense, but in a spiritual—in unity of sentiment, sympathy, aim, soul. All shall be one in Christ. They will be gathered in spirit together from the four winds of heaven.

CONCLUSION.—Haste this good time. May the chariot wheels

of Providence revolve with
greater speed.

"Onesong employs all nations, and
all cry,

'Worthy the Lamb, for He was
slain for us.'

The dwellers in the vales and on
the rocks

Shout to each other, and the
mountain tops

From distant mountains catch
the flying joy,

Till nation after nation caught
the strain,

Earth rolls the rapturous Ho-
sanna round."—*Cowper*.

Biblical Criticism.

Αἵματις: A Ransom.

"THE SON OF MAN CAME . . . TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR
MANY."—*Mark x. 45*.

THESE words of Christ may be called the text of all that has ever been said about the virtue of Christ's death by preachers of the Cross, inspired or uninspired. It is most important to consider carefully what meaning it bore as originally used by Christ. And here it is perhaps to be regretted that the question has been somewhat prejudged by the use of the Vulgate word *redemptionem* and the English *ransom*. The popular notion of a ransom, is a price paid to redeem a captive or bondsman. And wherever the word is used it seems to involve necessarily the idea of the price being paid to him from whom the captive is delivered. Dominated by this idea of ransom, divines from Origen downwards have been ever asking, To whom was mankind's ransom paid? And the whole subject of the Atonement has been almost hopelessly complicated by this idea of its being a transaction between two parties, one giving and the other receiving a compensation or ransom. It has been roughly stated, that for 1000 years (down to Anselm's time) the Church taught that Christ paid and the evil one received the ransom; and that since then the Church has been divided between the Anselmic notion of a transaction whereby the Son appeased His offended Father. A healthy conscience recoils from all

three ideas. $\Phi\epsilon\varsigma\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \epsilon\beta\epsilon\pi\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma$, Out upon the insulting thought! is Gregory Nazianzen's protest against the first; the second is artificial and scholastic; the third shocks us. None of the three is to be found in Scripture. They all rest on a determination to press into the Greek word used by Christ all that is involved by the words *redemptio* and *ransom*. Whereas a careful study of the language of Scripture shows that the words $\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\tau\rho\omicron\nu$ and ransom are by no means equivalent. Let us carefully examine the word $\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\tau\rho\omicron\nu$. Etymologically, the word means something that loosens what is bound. But as a man may be bound in two senses, *civilly* as a slave or a captive, *religiously* as a sinner by his sin, so the word $\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\tau\rho\omicron\nu$ comes to have two senses—a civil and a religious sense. In its civil sense, $\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\tau\rho\omicron\nu$ means, compensation given as the price of liberation. It is so used in Lev. xxv. 25–30, for the price paid to redeem the property or person of an insolvent debtor: the Hebrew word for $\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\tau\rho\omicron\nu$ in this sense being $\Gamma\text{׳}אֱלָה$ (g'ullah) from $\ג\text{׳}אֵל$ (ga'al) to redeem from pawn. In its *religious* sense $\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\tau\rho\omicron\nu$ means an oblation to God, or the money value of such oblation (a deodand as it were), to redeem or atone for a life forfeited to God. The oblation usually took the form of the sacrifice of the life of an animal, by way of acknowledgment that the life of the offerer was really forfeited and that all life is God's gift. The $\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\tau\rho\omicron\nu$ in this case was expressed in Hebrew by the word $\כֹּפֶר$ (copher) a distinctly religious word, carrying with it the idea of atonement, and containing obviously no notion of compensation to any one, but rather that of satisfaction of the Divine law. We will call this the religious or sacrificial sense of the word $\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\tau\rho\omicron\nu$. To take one of the lower instances of its use:—Where an ox known to be vicious gored any one to death, the proprietor's life as well as that of the ox was forfeit; but the proprietor's life might be redeemed ($\פָּדָה$ padah) by payment of a $\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\tau\rho\omicron\nu$, the $\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\tau\rho\omicron\nu$ being a $\כֹּפֶר$ copher or oblation to God by way of atonement. But let us take a higher instance. On the Passover night the first-born of Israel were redeemed (padah, Exod. xiii. 13–15) from

the destroying angel by the blood of the lamb. This blood, or life of the lamb, was their *λύτρον*. Need it be said that it never entered the mind of an Israelite, that it was given by way of compensation to the destroying angel? His only thought was, that God needed it as an acknowledgment that they owed their deliverance entirely to His grace, and that their lives henceforth belonged to Him. And in after years provision was made for the continuance of the acknowledgment by the consecration of the tribe of Levi. Moreover, the whole people acknowledged that they were a redeemed people by the half-shekel payment whereby the sanctuary service, with its morning and evening sacrifice of a lamb, was maintained. We have the full account of this in the 30th chapter of Exodus. We there find the half shekel called copher or *λύτρον* an "offering to the Lord," "atonement money," a "ransom for the soul" (Exod. xxx. 12-16). And in the 12th verse we find that the continual confession that their lives belonged to Jehovah saved them from any plague. Very much to the point is the note on this institution of the sanctuary tax in the Speaker's Commentary. Mr. Clark says there,—“This payment is brought into its highest relation in being here accounted a spiritual obligation laid on each individual, a tribute expressly exacted by Jehovah. Every man of Israel who would escape a curse had in this way to make a practical acknowledgment that he had a share in the Sanctuary on the occasion of his being recognised as one of the covenanted people.”

J. P. NORRIS, B.D.

SOUL SALVATION.—What is it? It is not deliverance from Divine wrath, for there is no wrath in God. It is not deliverance from a material hell, for material fires cannot scorch the spirit. It is not something wrought outside of the soul. “The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven or hell.” Salvation is in moral character, and character is a product of habits, and habits of acts, and acts involve a series of thoughts, deliberations, decisions. Salvation is, in one word, the restoration in the soul of what it has lost—lost love, lost freedom, lost harmony, lost usefulness, lost filial access to God, lost moral self-respect.

The Preacher's Emblematory Helps.

ANCIENT MYTHS: THEIR MORAL MEANINGS.

Books of Reference: Max Müller's "Lectures on Comparative Mythology," Hardy's "Manual of Buddhism," Pritchard's "Analysis of Egyptian Mythology," Coxe's "Mythology of the Aryan Nations," Coxe's "Tales of Ancient Greece," Gladstone's "Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age," Farrar's "Critical History of Free Thought," Keary's "Heroes of Asgard," Canon Kingsley's "Sermons," Ruskin's "Queen of the Air," Sir T. Malory's "Morte d'Arthur," "Bacon's Essays," "Murray's Manual of Mythology."

"Shall we sneer and laugh at all these dreams as mere follies of the heathen? If we do so, we shall not show the spirit of God or the mind of Christ, nor shall we show our knowledge of the Bible."—*Canon Kingsley.*

No. IX.

The Sirens: or, False Pleasure.

THESE sea-nymphs, who rank among the inferior deities, were the daughters of a river god and a Muse. They were probably personifications of hidden banks and shallows, where the sea is smooth and azure and gleaming, inviting by the music of the prancing wave, but destroying the mariner and his ship. Homer says nothing of their number, but in late times three were recognised, and their names were Parthenope, Ligeia, and Leukosia. They were playmates of Persephone, and for not protecting her from Pluto, were transformed into beings half woman, half bird, or sometimes half fish. Their wings were lost because they presumptuously contended with the Muses, and in the rash conflict were worsted; being spoiled of their pinions. The homes of these Sirens were the cliffs of pleasant islands off the sunny coast of Italy. There they evermore sang; by the sweetness of their voices, bewitching passing mariners. They

adapted their melodies to the ear of each listener, and so captivated all. They charmed them, only to secure them and to slay them. So destructive had they been, that skeletons of the slain lay thickly strewn around their dwelling, so thickly, indeed, that from afar their island homes seemed to be girt with snow-white cliffs; but the whiteness was that of the unburied bones of their murdered captives. All passing mariners were not, however, thus charmed, captured, and slain. Some, forewarned of the peril, steered their barks beyond reach of the Sirens' voices. Others went near, but resisted the charms; for instance, Ulysses, who filled his companions' ears with wax till they were deaf, and bound himself to the mast till his ship had borne him where their song could no longer be heard. And by another method than either of the other two, the Argonauts conquered the charm; for they listened entranced to the surpassing music of their companion Orpheus, whose voice and harp were celebrating the praises of the gods. In that

sweet and sacred harmony the melodies of the Sirens were drowned, and so the listeners rose superior to all temptation to sail towards the fatal shores. The Sirens, thus conquered, were metamorphosed into rocks.

All this readily illustrates four truths about False Pleasure.

I. THE NATURE OF FALSE PLEASURE. It is an evil thing, and under a curse, as these Sirens were. For like them (1) it has endangered purity, as they did Persephone; (2) it has intruded into spheres in which it should have no dominion, as they did into the domain of the Muses; and (3) it is a complex, compound thing, chiefly animal, while partly human.

II. THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF FALSE PLEASURE. (1) It chooses scenes of delight like sunny islands, whose cliffs whiten over azure seas. The fairest spots in Nature, the homes of Art and Song, the very sanctuaries of worship, are its favourite haunts. (2) It utters enchanting temptations. For its voices come not only in the tones of music, but in vast variety of tone, suited to the nature of those that are tempted, and indeed to the ever-varying moods of such tempted ones.

III. THE DESTRUCTIVENESS OF FALSE PLEASURE. There are myriads of skeletons as its

ghastly trophies. Material skeletons—for there is ruined health, and shattered body, and premature death. Mental skeletons—for there is inflamed genius, and polluted imaginations, and the disordered reason of the despairing sceptic. Moral skeletons—for there is deadened conscience, paralysed will, exhausted affection.

IV. THE VICTORY OVER FALSE PLEASURE. The three methods are suggested here. (1) Avoidance. The mariners who kept their course far away from the fated islands, are pictures of all those who listen to the wise man's words, "Avoid it: pass not by it: turn from it and pass away." (2) Resistance. Ulysses, binding himself to the mast, stopping his companions' ears, are pictures of such as obey the command, "Resist the devil." (3) Superior sympathy. Listening to "the sweeter and sacred" music of Orpheus, and so being insensible to all the influences of the Sirens: the Argonauts are the picture of those who by higher joys are delivered from lower pleasures. They are saved by what Chalmers calls "the explosive power of a new affection." They have the victory that overcometh the world, even faith.

URIAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

The Worldling a Hypocrite.

WERE he to show to the eye of society all the dark thoughts, wicked schemes, and passions which pass through his mind,

his existence would not be tolerated, the world would not bear with him. In proportion to the sinfulness of a man's heart, is the force of his motive to hypocrisy.

Spiritual Wealth.

EVERY man is daily increasing his *spiritual stock*. It is a solemn fact, that accessions are made to our moral history with every new impression, thought, purpose, and act. We are not like channels, through which the waters of circumstance flow, and which never become more full; but rather like reservoirs into which all events, feelings, and acts of life flow as contributing streams, and there remain and augment. As a healthy tree gathers every moment a something from the external system, transmutes it into its own nature, and makes it part of itself, so every moment we incorporate into our own moral being something that passes over our consciousness. Our moral stock is greater to-day than yesterday, and to-morrow will be greater still, and thus on for ever. Our whole life is a treasuring up; moral accumulation is the great law of our being. The value of *this ever accumulating stock* will depend on the moral state of the heart. The presiding disposition gives its colour and character to every idea, and event of our lives. It transforms everything into its own image. If the disposition be unholy, the whole knowledge and experience which a man accumulates, are not only worthless, but ruinous to him. "*He is treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath.*" But if the heart is pure and right, everything turns to moral value. From the same ray of heaven, one plant drinks in poison, and another nourishment: so from the same subject of conscious-

ness the one man will get a blessing and the other a bane, and that according to his presiding disposition.

Your Heart is where your Treasure is.

CHRIST thoroughly understands human nature; He throws out truths concerning it in the most free and unstudied way, to which the observation and inner consciousness of the world respond. Here is a specimen. Our hearts point to the treasure as the needle to the pole; our affections flow after it, as the tides flow after the moon.

Truth.

THE man who looks at truth under the influence of the secular, is like an individual looking at nature down a valley on a misty day. He is shut in by the hills and trees, so that his prospect is but very limited, and the few things he sees seem very dim and confused. But he who looks at truth under the influence of the spiritual is like one standing under the brightest sky, high up on the loftiest hill, his prospect is immense, and every object which comes within the sweep of his vision is distinctly seen.

It is self that obscures our moral vision. The smallest coin, held close to the eye's orb, shall shut out the landscape and hide the sun and stars. It is ever so with the vision of the soul: if you keep the world close to the heart, both the spiritual universe and the infinite God are excluded from your view.

Spiritual Riches.

SPIRITUAL wealth is *imperishable*. It can be eaten by no moth, corrupted by no canker, stolen by no thief. It is not something *out of* man, or something merely added to him; it becomes more a part of him than his own blood, it is incorporated in his own soul; it is not merely the subject, but the spirit of his consciousness; not the mere field, but the faculty of his vision. It is as imperishable as the soul.

The Morrow.

WE are made to look forward. As the traveller looks on upon the road through which he intends directing his steps, the soul wistfully looks to the probable futurity which awaits it. The streamlets issuing from the distant hills do not more naturally hurry to their ocean home, than the sympathies of the soul flow into the morrow; more than half our life is in the morrow: from it we derive most of our motives and our joys. Our ideal heaven is there.

SCIENTIFIC FACTS AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

"Books of Illustration" designed to help preachers, are somewhat, we think, too abounding. They are often made up to a great extent of anecdotes from the sentimental side of life, and not always having a healthful influence or historic foundation. We find that preachers and hearers are getting tired of such. Albeit illustrations are needed by every speaker who would interest the people, and are sanctioned by the highest authority. Nature itself is a parable. Hence we have arranged with a naturalist who has been engaged in scientific investigation for many years, to supply the *Homilist* with such reliable and well-ascertained facts in nature as cultured and conscientious men may use with confidence, as mirrors of morals and diagrams of doctrines.

The Walrus: Social Instincts in unexpected Forms.

SOCIAL instincts, and even noble traits, are not confined to mankind. We find them in strange places and in unexpected forms. Look at the Walruses, for instance. The social instincts with them are most powerful, and they fight for one another with a courage and an obstinacy that their strength and formidable weapons render often fatal to the hunters. Frequently the Walruses lie in

great numbers along the banks of the ice, motionless, and piled pell-mell one upon another. But one of them, during their repose, enacts the part of sentinel. At the slightest appearance of danger, it precipitates itself into the waves. All the others immediately attempt to follow; but in this critical moment the slowness of their movements sometimes produces the most grotesque scenes. In the confused state in which they have been lying, it is with difficulty they disengage themselves from the masses of heavy

flesh which enclose them on every side. Some roll awkwardly into the water; others crawl painfully along the ice. The weight of their body and the enormous disproportion of their limbs, render all movements upon the ice extremely difficult for them. But as soon as these ungainly animals are in the water, they resume all their vigour, and, if attacked, defend themselves with astonishing courage. At times, they themselves begin the fight; they dart upon the fishermen's boats, seizing the gunwales with their long hook-like teeth; and draw them furiously towards them. At times they glide under the skiff, and endeavour to capsize it. Their hardy, scaly, skin resists the blows of pike and spear; and it is neither without difficulty nor danger that the poor fishermen escape from such formidable adversaries. In these desperate combats the walruses are generally led by a chief, who is easily recognised by his great size and impetuous ardour. If the fishermen

succeed in killing him, at that instant all his comrades abandon the struggle, gather around him, support him by means of their teeth, and drag him in all haste far from the attacking boats, and out of peril.

But the most impressive and dramatic scene is when the Walruses fight to secure their young. Generally they attempt to deposit them on a bank of ice, in order that they may fight more freely. If they have not sufficient time to place them in safety, they take them under their paws, clasp them to their heart, and throw themselves with desperate audacity against the fishermen and the boats. The Walruses exhibit similar devotion and similar intrepidity when their parents are in peril. They have been known, though placed apart in security, boldly to quit the asylum chosen for them by anxious affection, and take their share in the struggle in which the mother was engaged, to sustain her efforts and participate in her dangers.

Homiletical Breviaries.

No. CCLI.

The Spirit with you and in you.

"HE DWELLETH WITH YOU, AND SHALL BE IN YOU."—*John* xiv. 17.

THREE remarks are suggested. It is implied I. THAT A MAN MAY HAVE THE DIVINE SPIRIT WITH HIM BUT NOT IN HIM. The Divine Spirit was now with the disciples in the person of Christ. He was the temple of the Godhead. Every man on the earth has the Divine Spirit *with* him. With him (1) In the operations of na-

ture. With him (2) In the revelations of the Bible. With him (3) In the events of history. With him (4) In the biography of all good men. It is implied, II. THAT IT IS A GREAT PRIVILEGE FOR A MAN TO HAVE THE SPIRIT OF GOD WITH HIM. What a privilege it was for the disciples to have the Spirit of God with them in the person of Christ! When the Spirit of God is with us, we have one at our side who is ever ready to guide us, protect us, strengthen us, and perfect us. It is implied, III. THAT IT IS A GREATER PRIVILEGE FOR A MAN TO HAVE THE SPIRIT OF GOD IN HIM. Christ had unfolded to His disciples an infinite system of truth; but His doctrines lay cold and dead in their memories. He deposited precious seed in the soil; but the soil lacked that warmth and sunshine that the Spirit of God alone could give. When the Spirit of God is in you, you have *spiritual life, satisfaction, power*. Compare the difference between the apostles when Christ was *with* them before His death, and when He came into them at the Pentecost.

No. CCLII.

The Mission of Moses ; or, the Qualification for a Divine Work.

“COME NOW THEREFORE, AND I WILL SEND THEE UNTO PHARAOH, THAT THOU MAYEST BRING FORTH MY PEOPLE THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL OUT OF EGYPT ?”—*Exod.* iii. 10.

Two remarks are suggested. I. GOD ELEVATES THE RACE BY THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF INDIVIDUAL MEN. He could have brought the chosen tribes out of Egyptian bondage into the promised land without any instrumentality at all, or by other instrumentality than human; but He employed Moses for the purpose. Thus He ever does. Whatever improvement takes place in the condition of the human race in any age, is by God and by God in connection with the agency of man. The redemption of the race, either political, social, ecclesiastical, mental, or spiritual, is always effected by man. Who does not see wisdom and goodness in this procedure? First: It serves to promote in man the principle of *self-helpfulness*. Men are not to look “here or there” for help, but to themselves. It is only as a man is thrown back on his own powers and prompted to employ them vigorously that by his constitution he can rise. Secondly: It serves to promote *social unity*. As men help men, that principle of interdependence

is developed and strengthened, which is the guarantee of social order and good-will. II. GOD SPECIALLY QUALIFIES THE MAN HE EMPLOYS TO ELEVATE THE RACE. He qualified Moses now at least in five ways. First: By a *special manifestation of Himself*. "The angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire," etc. (Exod. iii. 2). No man who has not received a deep impression concerning God, can do much, if anything, towards helping the world. Secondly: By *impressing him with the divinity of his mission*. "God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM, and thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me to you," etc. It is only as a man feels that God has sent him to do a work, that he will throw his whole being into it. When he has this feeling he becomes earnest and invincible. Thirdly: By *assuring him of His co-operation*. "And I will stretch out mine hand and smite Egypt," etc. (Exod. iii. 20). Without the assurance of God's help, we are craven and impotent for any noble work. Fourthly: By making him *sensible of his own insufficiency*. "Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since Thou hast spoken unto Thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue" (Exod. iv. 10). A sense of self-sufficiency is a disqualification for any divinely philanthropic work. "When I am weak, then am I strong." Fifthly: By *providing him with a coadjutor to supplement his deficiencies*. Moses could not speak, but God gave him Aaron as a tongue. "He shall be a spokesman unto the people."

No. CCLIII.

The Death of Enemies.

"ALL THE MEN ARE DEAD WHICH SOUGHT THY LIFE."—*Exod. iv. 19.*

FIRST: In a world like this, the greater the man the more enemies he will have. His whole life and teaching will strike every hour against the prejudices, the sycophancies, and the selfishnesses of his contemporaries; and thus he will irritate them and kindle their animosity. Moses had his enemies, so did David, so did Jeremiah, so did John the Baptist, so did Paul, and so did,—more than all the rest,—Jesus Christ. Secondly: Death in this world is constantly sweeping away our enemies as well as friends. "All the men are dead which sought thy life." I. The death of our enemies should RESTRAIN RESENTMENT.

Were it not wrong to return evil for evil, to revile those who revile us, it would scarcely be wise. While we are preparing our retaliating machinery, death is doing his work with them. Our blows will scarcely reach them before they fall, and then, when they are gone, they can do us no harm. But if we have retaliated, the memory of the retaliation will give us pain. We can remember not a few of those who, either from wounded pride, jealousy, or greed, have sought to do us harm, who are now sleeping under ground. "They have no thought of all that's done, beneath the circuit of the sun." Do we bear them malice? Not a whit. We only regret any resentment we might have shown them. II. The death of our enemies should STIMULATE US TO OVERCOME EVIL BY GOOD. We should pray for our enemies and do good to them that spitefully use us. The sublimest conquest is not that which will crush the body or wound the feelings, but that which will subdue the enmity and win the hostile soul to friendship and love.

"The fine and noble way to kill a foe,
Is not to kill him : you with kindness may
So change him that he shall cease to be so,
And then he's slain. Sigismund used to say
His pardons put his foes to death ; for when
He mortified their hate, he killed them then."

Charles Aleyn.

My Ministry at Stockwell.

(Continued from page 158.)

SOON after I came to London I was invited to become a member of two Ministerial fellowships: the one meeting monthly in the London Coffee House, in the City; and the other monthly, and alternately at the residence of each member. At the meetings of each we dined together, and afterwards had a free discussion upon subjects connected with our pulpit and pastoral work. The members of the local society were Revs. John Hunt, of Streatham Hill, the editor of John Howe's works; J. Dubourg, of Clapham; Baldwin Brown, of Brixton; B. Kent, of Norwood; W. Campbell, of Croydon; W. Bean, of Tulse Hill; J. Bunter, of Tulse Hill; Samuel Spink, late of Dover; John Burnett, of Camberwell. Of all these names only two or three remain.

Most have gone to their rest years ago. Soon after my membership, an incident occurred of a somewhat ludicrous character, but which caused me at the time a little amount of anxiety. Two of the members at the outset became frequent visitors at my house, viz., Messrs. Bean and Kent. The former was a rich man: he had no pastoral charge, was not a little supercilious, and failed to attain from his brethren any great respect, either for his intelligence or character. The latter was a man younger and of a higher type. He was intelligent, thoughtful, somewhat humorous, and satiric. He was a bachelor, and during his bachelorhood he used to come to my house every Saturday evening, take a cup of tea, and talk over the subjects of our discourses for the coming Sunday. On one of these occasions Mr. Bean turned in. It was a rainy night, and on leaving he borrowed my umbrella, promising to return it in a few days, which however he failed,—I have no doubt through forgetfulness,—to do. About a fortnight afterwards, during one of Mr. Kent's visits, he said, "Has Mr. Bean returned your umbrella?" And I found he had not. It occurred to me at the moment to have a joke at the expense of this haughty man; for, on account of his wealth, he bore himself somewhat loftily amongst us younger and poorer men. I at once sat down in the presence of my friend Mr. Kent, and wrote him a letter in the form of a legal demand. It ran thus.

"SIR—I am requested by my client, Mr. David Thomas, to apply to you for the sum of 15s., and unless the above is forwarded to my office, together with my costs, 6s. 8d., on or before Saturday next, legal proceedings will be instituted against you forthwith. I am, sir,—

Yours respectfully,

Lincoln's Inn Fields."

R. FERGUSON.

I never thought for a moment but that he would see it was a joke. I did not even disguise my handwriting, and my name appeared in the document. But with unaccountable obtuseness when he received the letter he asked his wife what she had had of this said "David Thomas." She declared she knew nothing of the matter. He summoned the servants and demanded an explanation. Poor creatures, they were utterly ignorant of the transaction. Hence, on the following day, one of the bleakest and most cutting days in March, he drives into town, goes to Lincoln's Inn Fields, spends several hours knocking at the houses, trying to find out this R. Ferguson. Of course he fails, returns not only disappointed and bewildered, but with a severe cold upon him which confined him to his room for several days. He recovers; and one morning, in walking out, he accidentally meets Mr. Kent, who innocently

asks him, "Have you returned Thomas's umbrella?" With that the subject dawns upon him and he exclaims, "Did Thomas send me that letter? If so, it is a scandalous shame, and I will have him expelled from the Society, for that letter has nearly been my death." He lost no time, he issued a summons to all the members of the fellowship to attend a meeting in order to wreak his vengeance on my devoted head, and get me expelled. At the meeting, John Burnett was called to the chair. The complainant made his charge in the gravest possible manner, detailing all the incidents; but before he reached the close, judge and jury broke into thunderous laughter, and thus the matter dropped. Although the letter was written from a momentary impulse of humour, and without one particle of unkindness in its spirit, I did at the time deeply deplore that I should have thus terrified this stupendous man. However, it passed off, and we were on the same terms as ever.

The members of the London fellowship, whose meetings were held in the City, were Revs. George Rose, of Bermondsey; J. Burnett, of Camberwell; B. Kent, of Norwood; Dr. Harris, author of "Pre-Adamite Earth," etc.; Dr. Carlisle, of Woolwich; J. Bubier; Dr. G. Smith, Secretary of the Congregational Union; and several others. As I turn in retrospect to these meetings, many interesting memories are evoked. I will mention two. One was a delightful afternoon spent with Dr. H. Bushnell, whom I regarded then, and still more now, as the greatest religious thinker and the grandest preacher of the age. His talk to me at that time seemed most stimulating to thought and scintillating with genius and humour. I remember well the judgment that he passed upon the several then popular preachers he had heard in London; and his declaration, that of all he had heard, only one approached the true mark, and that was the Rev. Caleb Morris, of Fetter Lane Chapel. Being a fellow countryman, a disciple, and an admirer of Caleb Morris, I was not a little delighted to hear from such a man such an estimate of my hero.

The other incident which starts to memory is a discussion which we had on the subject of the Evangelical Alliance, which had just then been formed. It was a warm debate; some were for it, some against it; I belonged to the latter party, so, I think, did Dr. Harris and Mr. Burnett. Dr. George Smith was exceedingly ardent on its behalf. Though a younger man, I ventured to expose the absurdities of his arguments. I endeavoured to show that it was utterly unphiloso-

phical to form a genuine soul union on the uniformity of theological beliefs. No man can really love another on account of similarity of faith. The devil, perhaps, believes all that we believe, and more. He had said that the new society would give an opportunity of proving to the world how Christians loved one another. To which I replied, that the very effort to prove it would only awaken suspicions that it did not exist. I remember saying on the occasion, that if a man wanted his neighbours to suspect his love for his wife, he had better call a public meeting and adduce all the arguments he could to prove his affection. The result of this discussion with my friend was an estrangement on his part which lasted through his life. He withdrew from our fraternity, and, I fear, never forgave me for thus venturing to oppose him in argument. Still, though not warm friends afterwards, we were not enemies; when we met, our words were mutually friendly. Ah, me! nearly all the members of this fraternity also are gone. Deeply saddened was I, three or four years ago, on going into the old house for refreshment. When the old waiter who used to attend upon us at our meetings recognised me, and referred to them, I asked him if he could repeat to me all the names of the members, and he did. And after every name,—about 14 or 15,—he pronounced I responded, “Gone,” “Gone,” “Gone.” Ah, me! our little fellowships, even the best of them, here, are only as the fellowship of the different leaves that form the lovely rose; one by one they fade, wither, and fall, till the whole flower is lost for ever.

(To be continued.)

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

A POPULAR COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT. BY D. D. WHEDON, D.D. VOL. IV., 1 COR. to 2 TIM. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.

We have already called the attention of our readers several times, and

commended, the expositions of Dr. Whedon. What we have said of the previous volumes is true of this one. It is clear, faithful, judicious, often suggestive. For Sunday School teachers it is admirable.

THE WORKS OF AURELIUS AUGUSTINE. A NEW TRANSLATION, EDITED BY REV. MARCUS DODS, D.D. VOL. XIV. THE CONFESSIONS OF AUGUSTINE. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, George Street.

"If St. Augustine," says Nourisson, "had left nothing but his '*Confessions*' and '*The City of God*,' one could readily understand the respectful sympathy that surrounds his memory. How, indeed, could one fail to admire in '*The City of God*' the flight of genius, and in '*The Confessions*,' what is better still, the effusions of a great soul?" There is in this book a child-like piety and intellectual power. Thanks to the enterprising publishers, this most wonderful work is brought within the reach of all.

THE CHRISTIAN'S MANUAL. A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF THE EMENDED NEW TESTAMENT. BY WILLIAM CARTAN. London: Williams & Norgate, Covent Garden.

Although we are at one with the Author of this book in the recognition of imperfections in our version of the New Testament, we do not see that he has done much in the way of contributing anything very valuable to theological science. Albeit there is a good deal of Scriptural research and independent thinking in the volume, and much to free the mind from the trammels of old theological dogmas. Much that the Author holds true, is error to us, and *vice versa*. The book for many reasons deserves the study of those who would make themselves acquainted with the phases of religious thought in this age.

COMMENTING AND COMMENTARIES: TWO LECTURES ADDRESSED TO THE STUDENTS OF THE PASTORS' COLLEGE, METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, TOGETHER WITH A CATALOGUE OF BIBLICAL COMMENTARIES AND EXPOSITIONS. BY C. H. SPURGEON. London: Passmore & Alabaster, Paternoster Buildings.

The object Mr. Spurgeon has in producing this work is most praiseworthy:—it is to direct students into those fields of criticism, hermeneutics, and theology where they can find the best materials in the readiest way to help them in their work. We cannot suppose that Mr. Spurgeon, industrious as he is, has read *all* the works in this "*Catalogue*" through and through; or that in all cases he has formed an *accurate* judgment as to their merits, undoubted as is the power of his judicial faculty. All that we suppose he has done, and was perhaps necessary for him to have done, was to examine carefully what he considered fair specimens of the book. It is not, therefore, likely that his judgment will be in accord with those who have gone with *great critical* attention into some of the most learned volumes in his "*Catalogue*." Whilst a few of the works which he recommends we consider rubbish, we agree heartily with him in the

main. We say this although he has spoken disparagingly of one or two of those productions of ours which had cost us immense labour, and to which we have been vain enough to attach some merit. But we must bow in humble submission before the authority of a critic who sneers at some of the greatest hermeneutical and theological works of the world. Had the profoundest thinker, the greatest biblical scholar, and most scientific theologian in Europe undertaken such a work as this, we should have considered it a somewhat daring thing for him to attempt. But Mr. Spurgeon has through his public life proved himself bold as a lion; and in truth all great men are courageous. Had Mr. Spurgeon furnished us with a mere Catalogue and contents of the works he has mentioned, the volume would be worth its price, and he would have done a good work. But he has done more than this: he has given us his judgment, and his judgment is that of a man undoubtedly of no ordinary homiletical aptitude and experience.

THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS. By FRANCIS JOHN HOOPER, B.A. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 27, Paternoster Row.

"The primary object of this work," says the Author, "is to show that the phrase of such frequent occurrence in the New Testament, ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν denotes, not (as it is commonly said to do) the Church, or the Christian dispensation, but the Davidic kingdom foretold by the prophets—the millennial Messianic reign on earth of Christ and confessors after the second Advent, conditionally appointed to take place in the Apostolic age."

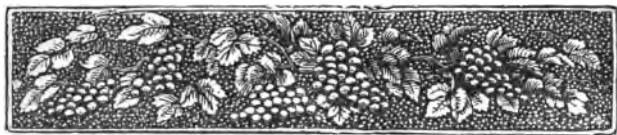
Though we cannot agree with the Author in this, we attach value to the work as the production of a man of great learning, profound thought, and Christian devotion. Some of his exegetical remarks are admirable, and start new trains of sacred reflection.

THE TWO NAPOLEONS: BEING A SKETCH OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF EUROPE FOR THE LAST EIGHTY YEARS. London: Crosby, Lockwood & Co., Stationers' Hall Court.

This is the 6th volume of the School Managers' Series of Reading Books; and we have never read any work, on the subject of which it treats, where the facts are so well put, in words few, clear, and strong. All the incidents of Napoleon's life are brought together here, and war is stripped of its glories. Napoleon I. is made to appear what he really was, a monster and a fiend.

SIX LECTURES ON QUESTIONS INDICATIVE OF CHARACTER. DELIVERED IN CAMBERWELL. By Rev. W. HARRIS. London: R. D. Dickenson, Farringdon Street.

These Lectures are admirable in every way as popular discourses: they abound in thought, and have the ring of an honest soul in them.



The Leading Homily.

ISAIAH'S VISION.

"IN THE YEAR THAT KING UZZIAH DIED I SAW ALSO THE LORD SITTING UPON A THRONE, HIGH AND LIFTED UP, AND HIS TRAIN FILLED THE TEMPLE. ABOVE IT STOOD THE SERAPHIMS: EACH ONE HAD SIX WINGS; WITH TWAIN HE COVERED HIS FACE, AND WITH TWAIN HE COVERED HIS FEET, AND WITH TWAIN HE DID FLY. AND ONE CRIED UNTO ANOTHER, AND SAID, HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, IS THE LORD OF HOSTS: THE WHOLE EARTH IS FULL OF HIS GLORY. AND THE POSTS OF THE DOOR MOVED AT THE VOICE OF HIM THAT CRIED, AND THE HOUSE WAS FILLED WITH SMOKE. THEN SAID I, WOE IS ME! FOR I AM UNDONE; BECAUSE I AM A MAN OF UNCLEAN LIPS, AND I DWELL IN THE MIDST OF A PEOPLE OF UNCLEAN LIPS: FOR MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THE KING, THE LORD OF HOSTS. THEN FLEW ONE OF THE SERAPHIMS UNTO ME, HAVING A LIVE COAL IN HIS HAND, WHICH HE HAD TAKEN WITH THE TONGS FROM OFF THE ALTAR: AND HE LAID IT UPON MY MOUTH, AND SAID, LO, THIS HATH TOUCHED THY LIPS; AND THINE INIQUITY IS TAKEN AWAY, AND THY SIN PURGED."—*Isaiah* vi. 1-7.

IT would be neither wise nor right in us to wish or pray for such a vision of the Lord as was granted to Isaiah, and as we have recorded in this passage. The day for that kind of thing has evidently passed away. Different as are the circumstances in which we find ourselves, they are essentially one, and they do not call for it. What suits us, and what God seeks to train us to in this world, as regards Christ, as regards Himself, is walking by faith, and not by sight; and indeed, in this respect, there is really no difference between us and Isaiah. He too had for the most part to walk by faith. The sublime vision of the Lord with which he was favoured soon vanished, and we have no reason to believe that it was ever repeated. In the discharge of his duties as a prophet, he could not dispense with the principle

of faith, any more than we can dispense with it in the discharge of the duties devolving upon us. We have not had, it seems to me, the necessary preparation for a vision of the Lord; and hence, if it were to be vouchsafed, it is doubtful if we could endure it and profit by it. I am not sure that Isaiah himself could have borne it, and reaped the good which it was intended to do him in his capacity as a prophet, had it occurred at the beginning of his prophetic career. He had to be specially prepared for it; and God, from whom the vision came, and whose messenger Isaiah was, took care, by previous dealings with him, to fit him for the reception of it ere it was made to him, as by the waving of a magic wand before him. We should not, then, take it upon us to pray for a vision of the Lord, or envy Isaiah that grand and impressive vision of which we have in the above passage a brief but severely simple and manifestly truthful account. We should rather rejoice in this, that, living as we do in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, and possessing as we do God's later revelation—the New Testament, we are in a position to acquire a higher knowledge of God than was possible to any of the prophets, Isaiah not excepted. The following well-known words of the Master: "*Verily I say unto you, among them . . . notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he,*" is well worth consideration in this connection. They have not the true idea of Christianity who do not think of it as a system of *light*, or who can bring themselves to exclaim, "Oh that it was with me as it was with Isaiah, who saw the Lord!" A child at noon of a summer-day night, with as much credit to itself, cry for the twilight in preference. If we have studied the Bible as we should, improved as we should the golden sheaf of privileges which, in the providence of God, has come into our very hands, we should know all about God which the vision of Isaiah is calculated to teach us, and a great deal more than it entered into the heart of any of the Old Testament prophets to conceive. When He was on earth, Jesus did not hesitate to say, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father;" and who is

ignorant that, in the gospels and epistles of the New Testament, Jesus stands forth garmented in light, much as He appeared to the disciples Peter, James, and John on the Mount of Transfiguration?

The fact that Isaiah had at one period in his history a vision of the Lord, and that he tells us in this oracle of what it consisted, is one reason why an independent vision of the same sort should not be given now-a-days. A faithful description of the Crystal Palace is about as good as the actual sight of that fairy structure of glass and iron, with its tastefully laid out and expensively furnished grounds. It is the next thing to seeing it. In like manner, for Isaiah to supply us with a word-picture of that vision of the Lord with which he was honoured on a certain occasion, is the next thing to seeing it with our own eyes. We have in chapter vii. an inspired verbal photograph of this vision; and it is for us, by careful and devout examination, to make it our own. What we should aim at is, beholding it through the eyes of Isaiah; and if we have a fair share of the power of imagination, there is nothing to hinder us from so viewing it, and familiarizing ourselves with its more prominent features, as to extract from it almost, if not quite, as rich a blessing as there was in it for Isaiah.

Inasmuch as sitting upon a throne implies a human form, we are inclined to agree with those expositors who speak of Isaiah's vision as a vision of *Jehovah-Jesus*; and there can be no doubt but that the scene of it was the holy of holies in the Temple. This was the natural place for it. Isaiah was in the court of the priests, where was the altar of sacrifice; and looking, as it were, straight before him, he saw into the holy of holies, the curtain that ordinarily hung in front of it having been drawn aside. And what saw he there? Had the holy of holies its usual appearance? Did he see the ark of the covenant, the shekinah glory, and the overshadowing cherubim? He did not. These objects had given place for a moment to a throne "high and lifted up," on which the Lord had seated Himself, and the seraphims. It was an accommo-

ated representation of heaven which he saw ; and there was seemingly no confusion in his mind, either at the time or afterwards, as to the various objects that filled the most holy place, or the relations in which they stood one to another. The vision was so clear and distinct as to leave no room for mistake ; and one cannot help noticing that in bringing Himself under the view of His servant Isaiah, the Lord assumed the form and affected the state of an Oriental monarch. This is just what we should expect, if it was meant that the vision should prove useful and suggestive, and be properly understood. Accordingly, the prophet makes use of sensible and earthly images in his description of the vision ; but, instead of complaining on this account, we should cherish and express feelings of the liveliest gratitude. Suppose that, in place of sensible and earthly images which all can appreciate, he had introduced purely spiritual and heavenly images, what would have been the value of his description of the vision to us ? It would have served only to annoy and puzzle us. Would there be any use in my taking up my Hebrew Bible, and at family worship reading to the members of my household a Psalm in the Hebrew tongue ? If I were to do that, they would be justified in remonstrating or requiring me to translate for them verse by verse. What do we know about spiritual and heavenly images ? Nothing at all ; so that if Isaiah wished the Jews, and all who might in the lapse of the ages have access to it, to understand the vision, he had no choice but to select and confine himself in his description of it to sensible and earthly images. The intelligibility of the description turns upon the employment of them ; and in reading and musing upon it, we should endeavour to reach the truth expressed by the sensible and earthly images. Now, if we set ourselves to do this, we cannot fail to be struck with the sublimity of Isaiah's vision, and to derive from it a vast amount of instruction concerning God—His nature, character, relations, and ways.

The vision rebukes those who entertain the notion that, so far as Divine superintendence is concerned, the universe is *in*

a state of orphanage. It is incredible that a God of boundless power, wisdom, and love would construct the universe, and then abandon it to itself. This is not the teaching of Scripture. God is a Spirit—essential activity. He is never done working, and He works on a scale that is worthy of Him. The universe is His. He claims it, and He retains the government of it in His own hands. A throne is the symbol of authority and rule; and of all thrones God's is the loftiest. Isaiah very well describes it as "high and lifted up;" he may well describe the train of heaven's King as filling the Temple. His skirts, when He sits in royal state, display matchless magnificence.

The vision likewise rebukes those who picture God as *absorbed in the contemplation of His own excellence, and as existing in solitary grandeur.* That is more an Eastern than a Scriptural conception of God, and it never warmly commends itself to man's heart and conscience. God is of a social nature; and, so far as we are able to judge, He would not be absolutely perfect if He were not. The proof of this is found in the fact that, like earthly kings, He has a court, as much superior to theirs as He is Himself above them. It has pleased Him to create persons as well as things innumerable. This at least holds good of that portion of the universe which He has given to the children of men. What is our world? It is a wonderful mixture of persons and things with and without life. Heaven is no solitude or desert. It is the abode of glorious creatures—resplendent with shining and burning ones. If not, it is to me unaccountable that Isaiah, in his vision, should have seen "seraphims" encircling the throne occupied by the Lord, Jehovah-Jesus. How many of those living ones came within the sphere of vision we are not told, nor is it material. Suffice it that the mention of seraphim at all as standing above and around the throne "high and lifted up," suggests that God dwells in the midst of, and is waited upon by, creatures who reflect His glory, and who are capable of understanding Him and entering into intelligent co-operation with Him.

Isaiah's vision further teaches us, that *the creatures referred to, and represented by the seraphim, possess such a knowledge of God, are in such sympathy with Him, and have such confidence in Him, that their lives are spent in an element of worship.* They know what it is, for they have experience of the heart's adoration relative to God. They grudge neither His superiority in nature and character to themselves nor His superiority in position. They are delighted to see Him on a throne "high and lifted up," they cluster eagerly round it, are never tired of giving expression to the reverence for God which characterizes them, and they have no higher or purer pleasure than to veil face and feet with their wings, and cry one to another responsively, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory." Their worship is intelligent. It is drawn forth by the insight which they have into the glories of the Almighty Father's character. It is sincere, fervent, spontaneous, harmonious; and they throw so much heart and energy into their service of God, that the volume of sound sets in motion the posts of the door, and is accompanied by a cloud of smoke or incense. It is deserving of passing notice, that two of the six wings possessed by each of the seraphim are left free. They do more than sing or passively worship. They hold themselves ready to execute the Divine commands; and hardly are they issued till, by the aid of swift, strong pinions, they are unerringly fulfilled. Music of the sweetest kind is not more welcome to our ear than are the commands of God to them; and I do believe that, if God were never to employ them to run His errands, they would droop, and pine, and die.

The vision on which I am commenting was not designed to be a mere show. It was not designed to amuse Isaiah, or excite wonder, or overawe him. It was designed to qualify him for the fulfilment of his course as one of the prophets of Judah; and nobly it answered its purpose. It made a profound impression upon him. It prostrated him in the dust. He did not dare to join in the worship of the seraphim. He was content to be simply a spectator. It raised the feeling

that he could not survive it; and it is not to be wondered at that it should, accustomed as he was to believe that no man could see the face of God and live. It quickened and deepened his sense of his own littleness, his own sinfulness, and general unfitness for the prosecution of the work of a prophet amongst a people whose lips were as "unclean" as his own. It came upon his soul with all the force of an earthquake, steadying it at the same time that it seized, shook, and searched it, and set him a-bewailing himself. That it produced a fine moral effect upon him does not admit of question. It must have heightened his conceptions of the Divine greatness and glory, and the wealth of the Divine resources; and it must have increased his faith in the reality of his mission as a prophet. Isaiah did not err in thinking that he was personally unfit in the circumstances to be a prophet—that he had not the requisite self-denial and courage; for it is one thing to exercise the functions of a prophet among a truth-loving; righteousness-practising people, and another thing to exercise them among a people sunk in corruption and given over to every species of sin and profligacy. But that was not the question. The question was this: Could God qualify him to be His prophet, and extend to him the needed protection? And after what he had seen, how could he doubt it?

In the "live [living] coal," we have a symbol of *purification*; and the gentle application of it to the lips of Isaiah shows that his prime duty as a prophet was to utter boldly and publicly, be the results what they might, the word of the Lord. It is useless for any man to attempt to lead the life of a prophet till God touch his lips, and take away their uncleanness; but herein lies our comfort, that we are never asked to do work for God without being first qualified for its due performance. The "live coal" which one of the seraphim placed on Isaiah's lips was taken from the altar of sacrifice, which stood in the court of the priests; and what does this fact teach us? It teaches us that sacrifice is the basis of pardon, and that, under all dispensations, fitness for the service of God comes of the reception of the Gospel, or the truth

about Him to whose one offering for sin all the Mosaic sacrifices pointed forward. Even God cannot purify us and prepare us for the doing of His will on earth, if the altar of sacrifice be ignored. We must be morally right before we can do work for God; and there is nothing that is adapted to renew those natures of which sin has made such terrible havoc, except the Gospel. What could the apostles, *e.g.*, have done for the cause of Christianity, had they not been themselves believers in Christ as their own Saviour? Nothing. And if faith in the love and atoning death of Christ was needful in their cases, we may depend on it that it is not less so in our cases; and therefore, to express myself figuratively, what we should first of all concern ourselves about, is the purging of our sin by the application to our lips of a live coal from off the altar of sacrifice. This is what qualifies us for standing up, and witnessing for principle, for truth, for Christ, for God, whether an evil world will hear, or whether it will forbear.

G. CRON.

Belfast.

THE primitive beliefs of humanity are the great forces of the world. As lightnings rend the thunder-cloud, as volcanic fires rive the mountains, the primitive beliefs of humanity have ever destroyed all opposing systems and institutions. Whatever theological dogmas are offered must pass away.

If you would improve mankind, you must appeal to their beliefs; you must bring out these truths in all the light which Christ has shed upon them. The world, I believe, can only advance as we appeal through Christianity to those intuitions of God, providence, responsibility, moral deliverance, and future retribution, which flit and flash through every man's soul.

PROFANITY.—This is a mighty evil. If the soul has not reverence, what has it? It has no depth of feeling, no balance of faculties, no true idea of life, no substratum of goodness. It has no virility. It is volatile and weak. It lacks sympathetic connection with the great Fountain of energy and peace. It moves through life, not like the imperial bird in the atmosphere, pursuing its sunward path, and, however the winds may blow, soaring onward and upward through massive clouds; but, like the loose feather, it is the sport of every wind; it gyrates, but cannot fly.

The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone philologically through this *TANACH*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough *homiletic* treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) The *History* of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) *Annotations* of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3) The *Assessment* of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) The *Homiletics* of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

No. CIII.

A Testimony and an Exhortation.

"TRULY MY SOUL WAITETH," etc.—*Psalm lxi.*

HISTORY.—This Psalm, like many of the compositions of this book, was for the public liturgy of the Temple. It is therefore addressed to the chief musician, whose name is *Jeduthun*. (See 1 Chron. xxv. 1-3.) Why this Psalm was dedicated to Jeduthun, cannot be determined, nor can we be sure of the exact occasion when it was composed. The general impression of expositors is, that it was during Absalom's rebellion, when the rebels sought to cast down the king because they were jealous of his power.

ANNOTATIONS: Ver. 1.—"Truly [margin, "only"] my soul waiteth [margin, "is silent"] upon God: from Him cometh my salvation." The idea is, and the language may be so translated, "Only in

God my soul is still, in Him is my salvation." No less than six times the word "only" occurs in the Psalm. The idea is, that in God alone he could find repose for his troubled spirit.

Ver. 2.—"*He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defence*" [margin, "high place"]. As in times of danger men would flee to lofty rocks for security, and such rocks abounded in Palestine, so the writer here says, "he resorted to the Lord as his rock." "*I shall not be greatly moved.*" There might be a little oscillation, but steadfastness withal.

Ver. 3.—"*How long will ye imagine mischief against a man?*" Both the Septuagint and Vulgate translate, "How long will ye make an attack upon a man?" How

long shall this rebellion continue? "*Ye shall be slain all of you.*" Hengstenberg translates thus, "All of you murder him." But the English version, says Faucett, "accords best with our text, which is Pual, or *passive*. "*As a bowing wall shall ye be.*" An image of the ultimate end of the ungodly (Ezek. xiii. 13, 14); Deut. xxx. 13). This confirms the English version, "*ye shall be slain,*" rather than "*all of you slay him,*" which would make David to be the bowing wall. "*As a tottering fence,*" or a fence violently struck (Ps. cxviii. 13).

Ver. 4.—"*They only consult to cast him down from his excellency.*" His excellency, his vantage of dignity. Envy was their inspiration (1 Sam. xv. 14). "*They delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly.*" This would apply to Absalom. Hypocrisy was one of the chief instruments he applied to obtain his ambitious ends.

Ver. 5, 6.—"*My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved.*" From the enemy he now turns to God, and urges his own soul to wait only upon Him who was his rock and salvation.

Ver. 7.—"*In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.*" God was his all in all, his strong rock and the object of his supreme glory.

Ver. 8.—"*Trust in Him at all times.*" Not only in prosperity, or in minor trials, but in all

times the most trying. "*Pour out your heart before Him.*" Pour it out as a vessel completely emptied of its contents (1 Sam. i. 15; Lam. ii. 19; Ps. cxlii.; 1 Pet. v. 7).

Ver. 9.—"*Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in a balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.*" "Only vanity are the sons of Adam, the sons of men a lie, they go up in the balance, their light is vanity."—*Dr. Murphy.*

Ver. 10.—"*Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.*" Not only, do not trust in men, but do not trust in wrong, oppression, robbery. "*If riches increase*" should they increase, even without robbery or oppression, do not set your heart upon them.

Ver. 11.—"*God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.*" The meaning of this is simply, "more than once hath God spoken." He is constantly speaking, but man does not always hear Him" (Job xxxiii. 14).

Ver. 12.—"*Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy.*" In all His communications He declares "power," "mercy," and "justice." "*Renderest to every man according to his work.*" Thou requitest man according to his work.

ARGUMENT.—The subject of this Psalm is *confidence in God alone*, in contrast with all other resources, and in face of all enemies and dangers. It contains professions, exhortations, and praise.

HOMILETICS.—The Psalm may be divided into two parts:—
A religious testimony, and a religious exhortation.

I. A RELIGIOUS TESTIMONY. The testimony here refers to *self*, *contemporaries*, and *God*.

First: The testimony concerning *self*. This you have in

ver. 1, 2: "Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from Him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved." Ver. 6 and 7 are the same in substance.

He testifies of his confidence in God. His confidence in God was (1) Supreme. "He *only* is my rock." Every man is bound both by right and policy to have some confidence in his fellow-creatures; society could not exist or progress without the exercise of some amount of mutual confidence. But the *only* object of supreme confidence is God. He is the rock, immovable amidst all the surges of time and the revolutions of the universe. His confidence in God was (2) Steadfast. "I shall not be greatly moved." All creatures are necessarily subject to mutations. It is conceivable that even angelic intelligences may sometimes "be moved," with little doubts; but a soul who centres his confidence in God would not be "greatly moved." It is said that all the motions of the earth on this planet send their vibrations to distant orbs in space; but those orbs, though moved, are not greatly moved. They continue steadfast in their respective orbits. So it is with the soul of the good man. The events of his daily life may sometimes vibrate on the chords of his soul, but they will not greatly move him, he is centered in God. His confidence in God was (3) Pacific. "Truly my soul," or, as in the margin, "is silent my soul." My confidence makes me silent and calm. In God my soul is still. "He will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed with God." Blessed, thrice blessed, the man who can bear this testimony concerning himself.

Here is,—

Secondly: The testimony concerning *contemporaries*. The writer speaks of his contemporaries (1) As malignant. "How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? ye shall be slain, all of you," etc. Men of malignant spirits abound in every age, and few pass through life who have not become at times the victims of malignity. David had his enemies. He speaks of them (2) As false. "They delight in lies, they bless with their mouth, they curse inwardly." "Surely men of low degree are vanity; men of high degree are a lie," etc.

David's testimony concerning his contemporaries is too applicable to the men of our age. Read the malignity of our times in the bloody wars, etc. Read the falsehood of our times in the schemings of politicians, the cant of religionists, the tricks of tradesmen, and the hollow shams in all departments of life.

Here is,—

Thirdly: The testimony concerning *God*. "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this," etc. (1) A testimony concerning His power. "Power belongeth unto God." All kinds of power belong to Him—physical power, intellectual power, moral power. He is the soul of all strength, the force of all forces. (2) A testimony concerning His mercy. "Also unto Thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy." By "mercy" here is meant kindness; God's kindness is even greater than His power, inasmuch as it inspires, directs, and controls. It is kindness that nerves and moves the Omnipotent Arm. (3) A testimony concerning His justice. "Thou renderest to every man according to his work." Justice is but a modification of kindness. It is kindness restraining, opposing, crushing those forces of evil that turn the universe into anarchy and agony. This testimony of God is sublime and meets our highest ideal.

Such is the religious testimony which we have in this Psalm.

Here we have,—

II. A RELIGIOUS EXHORTATION. Here is a twofold religious exhortation.

First: An exhortation to *self*. "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him." Man is a duality; in him there are two personalities in one. These often battle with each other, sometimes blame, and sometimes commend each other. Man is constantly exhorting himself, sometimes to be more industrious in business, more accurate in studies, more temperate in habits. Here is a man exhorting himself to wait only on God. This religious exhortation is (1) *Most available*. Every man has a preacher within. He need not go to hell for the want of a priest; there is a divine

monitor within him. This inner preacher is always with you, in the activities of the day, in the stillness of the night, at home or abroad, in sickness or in health. "I commune with my own heart upon my bed." (2) *Most efficient.* Unless a man exhorts himself, the exhortation of others will be utterly futile. All outward preachers are only valuable so far as they can rouse the inner preacher, and make him thunder in the great temple of conscience.

Here is,—

Secondly: An exhortation to *others*. Here is an exhortation to others: (1) Concerning a *right* object of trust. "Trust in Him at all times," etc. Great is the variety in the times of human life: times of youth, times of age, times of sickness, times of health, times of adversity, times of prosperity. Trust Him at all times. Trust Him, not only when the weather of life is calm and sunny, but trust Him amidst the rush of tempest, the roar of thunder, and the convulsions of volcanoes. Trust Him fully; pour out your heart. As all the roots of the tree strike into the soil, so let all the sympathies of your nature strike into God. As all the streams of the mountain roll to the ocean, so let the whole current of your soul flow towards God. He is an exhortation to others: (2) Concerning a *wrong* object of trust. "Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery; if riches increase, set not your heart upon them." Men do trust in oppression, not only tyrants, warriors, slaveholders, but unjust masters and mistresses that expect more service from employées than is just: hence the exhortation: "Trust not in oppression; "If riches increase." (1) *Here is a circumstance which most desire.* Some for wrong reasons, some for right reasons. (2) *Here is a possibility which some may possess.* "If riches increase." In some it is impossible; the poor men often get rich in one or two ways, either with or without their efforts. (3) *Here is a duty which all should discharge.* "Set not your heart upon them." Why? (a) Because to love them is unworthy of your nature. (b) Because to love them is to injure your nature. (c) Because to love them is to exclude God from

The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

your nature. (d) Because to love them is to bring ruin on your nature.*

CONCLUSION: Such are the religious testimonies concerning self, society, and God, we have in this Psalm; and such the exhortation concerning self and others. On account of both it deserves and demands our devoutest study. It is an admirable religious poem, and, like many others, it is without a moral blemish.

HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF JOB.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering; but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

No. LXVII.

The Speech of Elihu.—3. Grounds for claiming a Religious Hearing from our Fellow-men.

"WHEREFORE, JOB, I PRAY THEE, HEAR MY SPEECHES, AND HEARKEN TO ALL MY WORDS. BEHOLD, NOW I HAVE OPENED MY MOUTH, MY TONGUE HATH SPOKEN IN MY MOUTH. MY WORDS SHALL BE OF THE UPRIGHTNESS OF MY HEART: AND MY LIPS SHALL UTTER KNOWLEDGE CLEARLY. THE SPIRIT OF GOD HATH MADE ME, AND THE BREATH OF THE ALMIGHTY HATH GIVEN ME LIFE. IF THOU CANST ANSWER ME, SET THY WORDS IN ORDER BEFORE ME, STAND UP. BEHOLD, I AM ACCORDING TO THY WISH IN GOD'S STEAD: I ALSO AM FORMED OUT OF THE CLAY. BEHOLD, MY TERROR SHALL NOT MAKE THEE AFRAID, NEITHER SHALL MY HAND BE HEAVY UPON THEE."—*Job xxxiii. 1-7.*

EXEGETICAL REMARKS: Ver. 1.—
"Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches, and hearken to all my words." In this chapter, Elihu addresses himself especially to Job.

Ver. 2.—"Behold, now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth." As long as I could refrain from speaking, I did so; but now that I have once begun to speak, I

* See *Homilist*, Series II., vol. iv., page 649.

must be allowed to continue, till I have uttered all I have to say; and therefore I crave thy constant and undivided attention."

Ver. 3.—"*My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart: and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.*" "The uprightness of my heart shall be my eloquence, and my knowledge shall consist in this, that my lips speak clearly." The speaker had not, it appears, forgotten Job's finding fault with his friends for seeking to display their oratorical talent, on which occasion he had maintained that words spoken with sincerity, though plain and unadorned with rhetorical ornaments, were more powerful than set speeches replete with elegance and eloquence. Referring to this, Elihu says, I do not lay claim to eloquence, or to any great profundity of knowledge. I lay claim to sincerity of heart. No loftily worded phrases must be expected from me; all that I can promise is, that whatever I do say shall come out of my heart, and be expressed in plain and simple language, unvarnished and unadorned. Having thus modestly acknowledged his inability to play the orator, he next calls attention to the wish expressed by Job, that God would remove His rod and His terror from him, whereby he should be enabled to reason with Him, without being overwhelmed by His power and majesty; and in reference to this, Elihu says, "In me, at least, there is nothing whatever that can strike thee with awe and deter thee from endeavouring to refute my arguments, if I am wrong, for I am a human being like thyself."

Ver. 4.—"*The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.*" Here, he repeats what he had stated in chap. xxxii. 8. Per-

haps he refers to it again in order to assert that he and Job possessed a common nature, were men formed in the same way, from the breathing of the Almighty and the same clay.

Ver. 5.—"*If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up.*" The meaning of this verse is this, says Dr. Barnes, "The controversy between you and me, if you choose to reply, shall be conducted in the most equitable manner, and on the most equal terms. I will not attempt, as your three friends have done, to overwhelm you with reproaches; nor will I attempt to overawe you as God would do, so that you could not reply. I am a man like yourself, and desire that if anything can be said against what I have to advance, it should be offered with the utmost fairness and freedom. *Stand up.* That is, maintain your position, unless you are convinced by my arguments. I wish to carry nothing by mere authority or power."

Ver. 6.—"*Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay.*" "Behold, I am like thyself, of God; formed out of clay am I also."—*Delitzsch.* So Moyses: "I, like thee, am a creature of God." Others, however, regard Elihu as saying, "I am according to thy mouth or wish for God, that is, I am in His place." Perhaps the reference is to ver. 35, chap. xxxi., where he had exclaimed, "Oh that one would hear me! behold, my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine adversary had written a book." Elihu perhaps means, "Thou hast expressed a wish to reason with God. I am here in His stead, reason with me, thou needest not be afraid, for I am a man like thyself."

Ver. 7.—“Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.” In chap. xiii., ver. 21, Job had said, “His hand was heavy upon him,” and what Elihu here means is, “If he

would come to him and regard him as speaking in the name of God, he would not feel any pressure.” If these were the claims of Elihu, we know not on what grounds he built them.

HOMILETICS.—These verses reveal to us good grounds for claiming a religious hearing from our fellow-men. What are these grounds?

I. A consciousness of SINCERITY.—“My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart.” There might be in this language an oblique reproof to the three friends who had spoken. They could scarcely have believed him the great sinner and great hypocrite which they in their arguments had represented him to be. Elihu means to say, “my words shall be the expression of the genuine feelings of my heart.”

A speaker who is conscious of his sincerity has a strong claim to the attention of his hearers. Though he may be mistaken in his sentiments and under the influence of error, his sincerity implies that he has employed his faculties to reach convictions which he is desirous to propagate.

Whilst sincerity is not necessarily a virtue, insincerity is essentially a sin. A sincere man, though he may not be true to eternal realities, is true to himself and deserves honour; but an insincere man is untrue to eternal fact and also to himself. A man who believes, has a right to speak. “I believe, and therefore I speak.” The greatest things in the universe to a man are his convictions, whether they are right or wrong; and their existence gives him a strong claim to a hearing. Far greater respect have I for a man who proclaims errors that he really believes in, than for the man who utters truths in which he has no faith. I prefer a fanatic to a charlatan.

II. A consciousness of KNOWLEDGE TO COMMUNICATE.—“My lips shall utter knowledge clearly.” He felt that he had ideas on the great subject in debate, and that he had the power of laying them clearly before the mind of the patriarch. This is not the language of egotism or conceit, for the speech of this man reveals a vast fund of varied information.

It seems to me that he had more spiritual intelligence than either Job or his friends.

He who has the most knowledge, if he be sincere, has the strongest claim to a hearing. He who has not more knowledge than his hearers, has no right to speak; he is out of his place, whether in the senate, the college, or the church. Knowledge is the Divine licence for speech. Bishops often license ignorance and pretence; but God grants a licence for none but the enlightened and sincere. The man who stands up before his fellow-men to speak, conscious that he has something to say of which they are more or less ignorant, and which it is necessary for them to know, will always speak with an authority that will command attention. Let preachers therefore strive earnestly for knowledge,—a knowledge, not of the mere words of God, but of the ways of God; not a knowledge of mere facts, but a knowledge of eternal principles that create facts and govern the universe.

III. A consciousness of COMMON HUMANITY.—“The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life: I also am formed out of the clay.” Perhaps Elihu meant to say to Job, “I feel that I am essentially one with you—common reason, common conscience, common infirmities, common ambitions, common problems, common destinies. The man who does not feel this, has no claim to be heard. He whose manhood is lost in the preacher, the priest, the ecclesiastic, may speak with erudition and eloquence, but has no claim to my attention. The Great Teacher descended to the “lowest parts of the earth,” came down to the common experiences of humanity, and from that plane He spoke, and the common people heard Him gladly. The true teacher must be *en rapport*, he must bear the burdens and carry the sorrows of our common nature. Oh, come the day when man shall speak to man on the great questions of religion—not in professional modes of thought, or speech, or garb, or spirit, but as a brother immortal. “Thus commendeth himself to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.”

IV. A consciousness of REPRESENTING GOD HIMSELF.—“Behold I am according to thy wish in God’s stead.” God reveals Himself through man to man. A true man is the temple of God. There the Almighty Himself is to be met with. In Him the shekinah beams its mystic radiance. Paul at Athens said, “Him declare I unto you.” Every true man may be said to be in God’s stead on this earth. He is the mirror of God’s being, the organ of God’s will. The man who feels this may well feel confidence in speaking. “I beseech you in Christ’s stead, says Paul, be reconciled to God.”

CONCLUSION.—Heaven grant to all who speak to their fellow-men on the great vital questions of being, that consciousness of sincerity, knowledge, common humanity, and divine representation which Elihu seems to have had, and which are essential to the discharge of their high and awful mission.

SERMONIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—“Introduction to New Testament,” by Bleek; “Commentary on John,” by Tholuck; “Commentary on John,” by Hengstenberg; “Introduction to the Study of the Gospels,” by Westcott; “The Gospel History,” by Ebrard; “Our Lord’s Divinity,” by Liddon; “St. John’s Gospel,” by Oosterzee; “Doctrine of the Person of Christ,” by Dorner; Lange; etc., etc.

No. LXVII.

The Man Born Blind. Types of Character in relation to Christ’s Works.—1. Those who consciously need Christ’s Work.

“AND AS JESUS PASSED BY, HE SAW A MAN WHICH WAS BLIND FROM HIS BIRTH. AND HIS DISCIPLES ASKED HIM, SAYING, MASTER, WHO DID SIN, THIS MAN, OR HIS PARENTS, THAT HE WAS BORN BLIND? JESUS ANSWERED, NEITHER HATH THIS MAN SINNED, NOR HIS PARENTS: BUT THAT THE WORKS OF GOD SHOULD BE MADE MANIFEST IN HIM. I MUST WORK THE WORKS OF HIM THAT SENT ME, WHILE IT IS DAY: THE NIGHT COMETH, WHEN NO MAN CAN WORK. AS LONG AS I AM IN THE WORLD, I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. WHEN HE

HAD THUS SPOKEN, HE SPAT ON THE GROUND, AND MADE CLAY OF THE SPITTLE, AND HE ANOINTED THE EYES OF THE BLIND MAN WITH THE CLAY, AND SAID UNTO HIM, GO, WASH IN THE POOL OF SILOAM, (WHICH IS BY INTERPRETATION, SENT). HE WENT HIS WAY THEREFORE, AND WASHED, AND CAME SEEING."—*John ix. 1-7.*

EXPOSITION: Ver. 1.—“*And as Jesus passed by.*” Either on His way from the Temple after the attempted assault, or, as some think, on the next Sabbath. “*He saw a man.*” This man probably sat where beggars were accustomed to resort, in the neighbourhood of the Temple. “*Which was blind from his birth.*” It would seem a notorious fact that he was born blind.

Ver. 2.—“*And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?*” *ἵνα τυφλὸς γεννηθῇ*, or should be born blind. “As the doctrine of the pre-existence of souls and that of the metempsychosis,—the transmission of the soul of one person into the body of another,—though held by certain of the more philosophical Jews, was never a current belief of the people, we are not to understand the disciples here to refer to sin committed in a former state of existence; and probably it is but a loose way of concluding that sin somewhere had surely been the cause of this calamity.”—*Brown.*

Ver. 3.—“*Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*” But that, *ἵνα*, namely, to this end, was he born blind. The ultimate object of evil, as of things in general, is the glorification of God. Christ does not say that neither the blind man nor his parents had sinned, but that special sin was not to be charged on either in consequence of his blindness.

Ver. 4.—“*I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.*” “We must

work the works of Him that sent us, while it is day; night comes, when no man can work.”—*Dr. Davidson.* These words imply that Christ regarded Himself as having a special Divine power to do on earth, and to that work He must consecrate Himself with persevering diligence.

Ver. 5.—“*As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*” “He evidently knew that a spiritual effect of His coming into the world would be typified by the act He was about to perform. The connection between these words and the preceding may be thus expressed: When my death removes me, so that I shall no longer perform my Father’s work among you, then will that light be removed which at present creates for you a spiritual day; and so in xi. 9, 10. *ὅταν . . . ᾤ.* The expression denotes indefinite frequency, and must therefore be understood, in a general sense, applicable to present circumstances. Let me be at any time in the world, I am at such time the light. It is not meant that in consequence of His special mission He was at that particular time the light of the world; but that, being in the world, He was, in consequence of His nature and origin, the light of the world. *φῶς εἰμι*, “My character is light.”

Ver. 6.—“*When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.*” What is the object of such actions as these? Why did He, who could by a word open the eyes of the blind, here spit on the ground, make clay, and anoint the man’s eyes with

clay, and send him to wash in the pool of Siloam? Probably to deepen the impression of the miracle. For this reason, probably, Moses used the rod to get water from Horeb, and the tree to sweeten the waters of Marah. For this reason, too, probably Elijah used his mantle to divide the waters (2 Kings ii. 8). All this exertion, too, on our Saviour's part would strike against the superstitious sentiments which the Pharisees had in relation to the Sabbath.

Ver. 7.—“*And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam.*”

This is a pool or a small pond in an oblong form, at the lower end of the Valley of Jehoshaphat, overlooked by the wall of Mount Zion. Its sides are built up with stones, and a column stands in the middle, indicating that a chapel was once built over it. It is in length 54 feet by 18 in

breadth. It is fed probably by water from the Temple mount. “*Which is by interpretation, Sent.*” It can hardly be doubted but that the Evangelist was guided by some sense of the appropriateness of the name of the pool to the occasion. Either the character of Jesus as the Sent of God, or the character to be assumed by the blind man in order to obtain his cure, the sent by Jesus, would seem to be intimated. Reference to the similar cure and the whole case of Naaman renders the latter the more probable. It should be observed, that in Isaiah viii. 6 this pool is spoken of emblematically. “*The waters of Shiloah that go softly.*” “*He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.*” It does not appear that he came to Jesus, nor did he see Jesus at all until his expulsion from the synagogue (ver. 35).

HOMILETICS.—As this chapter is the history of one event, opening and closing (unlike most other chapters) with reference to the same subject, viz., that of a man “born blind,” homiletically it may be divided into several sections, each section used to represent certain classes of men in relation to Christ. These sections may be designated those who *consciously need* the work of Christ; those who are *speculatively interested* in the work of Christ; those who are *malignantly prejudiced* against the work of Christ; those who are *heartily interested* in the work of Christ; and those who are *experimentally restored* by the work of Christ.

These seven verses we take to represent those who *consciously need* the work of Christ. Looking at the poor blind man before us, as represented in the consciously needy class, two things are presented,—

I. THE WRETCHEDNESS OF THEIR CONDITION.

First: This man was afflicted with *blindness*. He had never enjoyed the blessings of vision. Those windows through which the human soul looks out upon the universe had, in his

case, never been opened. Those doors through which the soul lets in the beauty of God's creation had been barred from his birth. Unknown to him was the glory of the heavens, the majesty of the mountains, the sublimity of the sea, the beauty of the emerald meadows, the waving forest, the floral vales. The world to him was a great, black, monotonous cave. To him never came—

“ Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose.”

Secondly: This man was afflicted with *beggary*. Day by day, perhaps from his earliest childhood, he sat near the Temple in darkness, begging for the mere necessities of life. He lived on the cold, precarious charity of those who visited the Temple. There, pinched with hunger, shivering in the cold, and scorched in the strong rays of the Eastern sun, he sat in the unbroken night of blindness, seeking relief of the passers by. How great the affliction of this man! and the world abounds with subjects of affliction to a greater or less extent. The blind, the deaf, the destitute, the diseased, we meet in all the walks of common life. The question has often been asked, Why, under the government of God, should such cases as the one in the text occur? Why should the Great One send men into the world sometimes without the use of their limbs—cripples; sometimes without the use of their ears—deaf; sometimes without the use of their eyes—blind; sometimes without the use of their reason—idiots? These questions I have endeavoured to answer elsewhere.*

Thirdly: This man was afflicted with *social heartlessness*. The question of the disciples, “ Who did sin, this man or his parents? ” indicated a heartless disregard to his wretched condition. If the question fell on his ear, as in all probability it did, it must have struck pain into his heart. Their question involved a great error, viz., that present sufferings are the results and measures of individual sins. That suffering always implies sin, is an unquestionable fact; and that the sin of

* See my “ Homiletical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles,” p. 46.

parents often entails sufferings on their children, is too patent to admit of disputation. But that individual suffering is always the result of individual sin, is an egregious and pernicious error. It was indeed a common notion amongst the Jews. The whole book of Job seems to have been written in order to correct it. Christ Himself exposed the error (Luke xiii. 1-4). The sufferings of individuals are no just criteria of moral character. Their question involved a positive absurdity. Part of this question was very absurd. How could the blindness of a man "born blind" be the result of his sin? How could he sin before he was born? Did they believe in the Pythagorean doctrine of metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls from one body to another, that they spoke of a man sinning before he was born? If so, their question was consistent with their faith; but it is not likely that the poor fishermen of Galilee held such a philosophical dogma.

This man, then, consciously required the help that Christ alone could render; he was blind, indigent, despised. Spiritually, all men in their unregenerate state are in as urgent a need of the aid of Christ as this man. Alas! but few realize their necessity.

Another thing presented here is,—

II. THE NATURE OF THEIR DELIVERANCE. We learn,—

First: That the deliverance is the *pre-determined work of God*. "Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." Christ does not mean that either this man or his parents were free from sin, but that their sin was not the cause of the man's blindness. His blindness was a Divine result for a Divine purpose; it was to afford scope for His remedial agency. God's restorative agency reveals Him often in more striking aspects than even His creating and preserving. God should be studied as a *Restorer*.

We learn,—

Secondly: That the deliverance was *effected by Jesus Christ*. "I must work the works of Him that sent me." Those works were redemptive works. His work was to finish transgression

and to make an end of sin; to heal all the diseases of mankind ; to wipe away all tears from all faces. (1) This work He did *systematically*. He did not proceed in a capricious and desultory manner. He worked by a Divine programme. He did the right work in the right place, on the right person, at the right time. (2) This work He did *diligently*. "While it is day." He knew His work was great, and the period Divinely allotted for its accomplishment limited. These works of Christ suggest three truths of importance. (a) There is a Divine *purpose* in every man's life. (b) There is a Divine *work* for every man's life. (c) There is a Divine *limit* to every man's life. (3) This work He did *appropriately*. "As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world." He assumes a character corresponding with the exigencies of the sufferer. To the thirsty woman at Jacob's well, He was the "*living water*;" to the mourning sisters at the grave of Lazarus, He was "*the resurrection and the life*;" to this poor blind man, He was the "*light of the world*." He is the central light in all the spheres of being. The material heavens borrow their brightness from Him. The beams of reason are but the radiation of His intelligence; the rays of moral goodness are but emanations from Him, the "*Sun of Righteousness*." (4) This work He did *unasked*. It does not appear that the blind man besought His interposition. "As Jesus passed by, He *saw* a man which was blind." He looked, perhaps, steadfastly at him as he sat there in destitution and darkness, as He looked at the poor widow of Nain following her only son to the grave, as He looked at the fainting multitudes whom He fed by a miracle. Though the Jews had just taken up stones to cast at Him as He was leaving the Temple, yet, as He "*passed by*," He tenderly observed the poor blind sufferer. The violence that raged around Him did not disturb the calm flow of His compassion for sufferers. Ill-treatment from our fellow mortals tends to make us miserable and misanthropic. Not so with Him. The fountain of His love was so infinite, that it admitted of no diminution. In this man's case He was "*found of one who inquired not after Him*." (5) This

work He did *instrumentally*. "When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." These means were very simple. No chemical compounds were applied, no surgical operations were performed. Clay! Why such means were employed, who can tell? All we know is, that the healing virtue was not in the means, but in Himself. It is the prerogative of Christ, to produce grand results by feeble instrumentalities. The man went, after the application of the clay to his eyes, to Siloam, as directed. "He went his way, therefore, and washed, and came seeing." A new world opened round the man, and new and strange emotions came rushing into his soul. All this may be regarded as symbolic.

The Preacher's Germs of Thought.

Men Denying the Just One.

"BUT YE DENIED THE HOLY ONE AND THE JUST, AND DESIRED A MURDERER TO BE GRANTED UNTO YOU."—*Acts* iii. 14.

THE death of Christ will ever exert a mighty influence upon the thought and heart of man. While the Fall has begotten a groaning which has rent the heart of humanity and moved the Infinite to pity, the death of Christ has filled the earth with hosannahs, and heaven has heard and joined in the song. But while this fact must ever be the most precious to man, it is yet associated with memories of the most humiliating character. It tells a tale of man's iniquity which is most revolting. What shame the murderers of Jesus must have felt, as they reviewed, on its every side, their guilty part! and how their hearts must have quailed before the terrible charge brought against them in the text, "But ye denied," etc.

I. The PERSON against whom the outrage was perpetrated. Men thought Him a mere Jew; and yet He possessed a univer-

sality and fervour of love inconsistent with the Jewish character generally. Men regarded Him as only a carpenter; and yet He evinced a strength of mind and soul which enabled Him to grapple with Divine things, altogether beyond the grasp of the Jewish doctors. Men thought Him a mere man; and yet there were profound depths and majestic heights about His nature, which entirely separated Him from the common herd. (1) He looked like a man; but His *words* proved Him more. He revealed man to himself, and so brought God near. He was, truly, a master in Israel, for none could equal in simplicity and sublimity a teacher such as He. "Never man spake like this man," yet, they "denied the Holy One and the Just." (2) He looked like a man; but His *works* proved Him more. If men felt a thrill of astonishment as they listened to His "gracious words," they were awe-stricken as they gazed upon His mighty deeds. Never had human life so shone with the radiance of benevolence. At every step He stooped to help some struggling soul. Nothing but Divinity could inspire such self-sacrifice. But the inspiration of love, alone, could not account for all His works. It required superhuman power to hush the storm on the sea of Galilee, or snatch from the arms of death the young man of Nain. (3) He looked like a man; but His *life* proved Him more. There was something about Him which awed and yet strangely attracted sinners; and in His presence they felt their hearts throb with heavenly life, just as vegetation receives a thrill of renewed life from the spring sunshine. But though men knew all this, they "denied the Holy One," etc.

II. The NATURE of the outrage that was enacted. (1) It was the *culminating* act of human transgression. Men had often committed great glaring sins—had debased themselves by lust, had become inflated by pride, and had even turned the truth of God into a lie. Men had often shown cruelty of the grossest kind—Daniel had been cast into the lions' den; Isaiah, sawn asunder; and Jeremiah, flung into a loathsome dungeon. But to crown it all, they "killed the Prince of life." (2) It was sin against their *highest* good. It was not a mere

blighting of their commercial prospects; not simply an outrage against their social well-being; not merely the desolation of their earthly life. But they were sinning against their immortal nature, and by that sin hazarding their eternal destiny.


III. The OUTCOME of it all. God turned the curse into a blessing. "He made the wrath of man to praise Him." (1) From the death of Christ came deliverance from the curse. Man by sin brought himself under the curse. This curse was a veil, hiding from man the richer glories of the Infinite. But Christ by His death rent the veil in twain, and the glory of God streamed forth with celestial radiance. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." With praise upon our lips and joy within our hearts we may adopt the prophet's language, "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." (2) From Christ's death came the magic force which conquered man's rebellion. Sinai's terrors and the Levitical law failed to evoke the deep affection and fervent devotion of men. But the Cross of Christ succeeded. "He loved me and gave Himself for me," was the motive which constrained men to give up all for Him. "We love Him because He first loved us," is the testimony of a million hearts. If other agencies fail to subdue mankind, the force of Divine undying love will surely succeed.

What relationship do we sustain to Christ? Are we denying the Holy One? Oh, rather yield to His love, and live to His *glory*.

W. T.

Christian Unity.

"ENDEAVOURING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE."—*Eph. iv. 3.*

"NITY of the Spirit" means unity of spirit. Where we are to look for the oneness of the true Church, Christianity has its seat in the heart. While this sentiment is often repeated in our expositions of Christian

unity, it is quite as often neglected in our endeavours to secure it.

I. The NATURE of Christian unity. What is it?

First: *Negatively*. (1) It does not mean *one sect*. The New Testament recognises Churches, not sects. It owns Paul and Cephas, but it takes no knowledge of *Paulites* or of *Cephasites*. Christianity embraces many sections of service and many schools of thought, while it utterly ignores the minor categories of men. (2) It does not mean *one creed*. There has never been a period in the history of the Church when all Christians were of one creed. No sober mind could conceive of such a condition, except in a state either of utter apostasy or of complete perfection. Healthy thoughts must proceed from unfettered thinking. As long as the Christian community contains independent thinkers, the world will be blessed with different views of religious truth. Change of air and change of scenery will be always beneficial to the Church, at least, until she reach the "delectable mountains" of the millennium. (3) It does not mean *one mode of action*. The kingdom of God is not compared to the workshop of the mechanic, where every article is formed by rule and pattern. This kingdom is a vineyard where work is regulated by numerous conditions, such as the character of the season, the nature of the soil, the aspect of the locality, the requirements of the day, the demands of the market.

It is true that a Christian life harmonizes with universal law. It is equally true that living men direct their energies by the dictates of living inspiration.

Secondly: *Affirmatively*. (1) Unity of *aspiration*. The image of God. The awakened soul longs for the Divine likeness. "Knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness" are infinitely valuable in its sight. Wherever this longing is felt, Christ is understood and appreciated as the way to the Father—to the Father's image as well as to His presence. The distance is great; still our Saviour's mediation spans the gulf. The ladder in Jacob's vision had its base on earth, "and the top of it reached to heaven: And behold, the angels of God ascending

and descending on it." (2) Unity of *principle*. The love of Christ. *The love of Christ to us, or our love to Him*. Wherever there existeth an appreciation of the former, there existeth also the indwelling of the latter. This principle actuates the life of every Christian. This is the power which moves his entire service. The passion of love is a strong principle; history is full of its doings. When misdirected, it is a prolific source of crime and disaster. The love of Christ is the highest and noblest of all affection, and, by a natural sequence, its achievements are the highest and noblest victories. Its monuments are imperishable, perpetuating to the world the turning points of time, and promising to the groaning creation enlightened ages of "peace and good-will." (3) Unity of *purpose*. The salvation of the world. By salvation here will be understood the people's present improvement and future happiness. Christ kept the two objects ever before him. The follower of Christ endeavours to do the same.

Improvement and happiness are inseparably connected. The two are embodied in the Christian sentiment. To imagine a Christian without the aim of his life promoting this saving purpose, would be to imagine a magnetic needle void of tendencies to the poles.

II. The IMPORTANCE of Christian Unity.

First: It gives a *faithful representation of Christianity to the world*. The religion of Christ is described in the written word. It is delineated in the life of the Church. "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, . . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God" (2 Cor. iii. 3). The true inquirer reads the two epistles and philosophizes on the difference between them; while general onlookers, in the hurry of the world, draw nearly all their conclusions from the conduct of Christians. Rather than dispute with them respecting the conclusiveness of their inferences, let the unity of the Church assume its destined solidity, and the threatening surges of infidelity in their most determined assaults will precipitately recede, broken, disappointed, heartless, to their ancient channels.

Secondly : It affords *true help to our fellow-members*. "Bear one another's burden." Every follower of Christ should endeavour to *bear*, and not to *bind*. With all the variety of works assigned to the disciples, no one is sent to bind burdens for or on the shoulders of others. The principle is true in this particular also : it is more blessed to give help than to receive it. "Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. xx. 28). The happiest disciple is he who is most faithful in doing good. He that helps Christian unity, helps the heart of the Church to beat strong and true to spiritual health, and thereby sends the thrill and warmth of life through numerous members of God's family. Here we find the distinctive mission of Christianity, and here the secret of its incomparable happiness.

Thirdly : It will *hasten the perfection of the Church*—the Universal Church. The principal aid we can render, is to attend to the admonition of the text, "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit." The desire for perfection is very general amongst the members of our Churches. Possibly we have not considered the importance of individual effort in this matter. The directions are simple :—Whatever I wish the Church to be, let me endeavour to set the example. The graces she should wear, let me wear those graces myself. Thus I shall hasten the perfection of the Church. It must begin in the heart, and from the heart it will spread its influence to the conduct, work, and characteristics of the Church. Perfection ! what a blessed consummation !

Then Zion will be seen in her glory, enjoying her resurrection health, wearing her beautiful garments, blessing the nations with the reign of peace, garnishing the earth with her varied graces, entertaining her friends with the riches of redemption, leaning on the arm of her beloved, repeating in entrancing tones the marvels of redeeming love, and bidding the kindreds of the earth to join her upward journey to the banquet of Heaven.

ANON.

The Fatherhood of God.—4. His relation to Christ and Redemption.

"GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE."—*John iii. 16.*



MENTION is made in this great text of *God's relation to Christ*. In approaching so wonderful a theme it were well to put aside all recollection of the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, and of the Patristic distinctions betwixt the eternal, antemundane and mundane generation of the Son, and pay heed to the gradually-developed teaching of God's word alone. Attention is caught and fixed by one called Jesus of Nazareth, speaking as man never spake, acting as man never did. We note His life—it is sinless; His character—gentleness and firmness are combined in perfect proportion; His teaching—it is of moral matters deeper than man's usual observation, of spiritual themes far beyond their ken; His power—it is superhuman, winds and waves, disease, death, and devils, are alike under His control. Who is this? Some say, A prophet. John the Baptist was "more than a prophet," yet he deemed himself unworthy to loose the shoe latchet of this preacher from Galilee. Now, we find it affirmed that He had no human father, but early recognized and served a heavenly. He allows Himself to be accosted and described as the Son of God, speaking of Himself continually as the Son of Man. Supposing one of us were to describe himself as a son of man, who would thank us for telling them what they knew so well? But with Jesus this evidently was the wonderful thing, that He should be on the earth in a human form at all. After awhile we find Him using yet loftier language, claiming equality, yea unity, with God: "No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father but the Son." "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." "I and the Father are one." This language is supported by His assumption of Divine authority in spiritual matters, and His manifestation of supreme power over things material. It was also understood

of the Jews, who charged Him therefore with blasphemy. So the relation of God to Christ is represented first of all as that of Father to Son, then as that of unity. Here is the grand difficulty, the opportunity of Unitarians, who appear to accept a part and reject a part of Christ's teaching concerning Himself. "You ask me," say some, "to believe that two individuals are one, and I find the idea unthinkable. When one calling himself Roger Tichborne, and asserted by others to be Arthur Orton, laid claim to a Hampshire estate, some thought him to be one person, and some another; but no one thought that he was both. With our minds constituted as they are (and God is the Father of spirits), we cannot conceive of two individuals as one, in common life or theology." Nor is this demanded, when we look at the ultimate teaching of revelation with regard to Jesus. If we trace up the two sides of this stupendous doctrine of Father and Son, we find them meet in the one summit—God.

In various relationships has God represented Himself to us, as Father, Husband, Brother, Friend, Son. These are but analogies. God cannot be Father to Christ in just the same sense that I am to my child; nor can Christ be Son to God in the same sense that my child is to me. Christ is God manifest in the flesh, is declared to be the Logos, the Word, that is, God expressing Himself; and when He so expressed Himself there was a begetting of the Son. The value of such manifestation is immense. Two pictures of the same object lie adjacent in the stereoscopic slide, beheld through an optical instrument, their combination into one presents a clearer, more vivid picture, with bolder relief than was seen in either apart from the other. So the Fatherhood of God and the Sonship of God, viewed in combination and unity, give us a far clearer idea of the greatness and goodness of God than we attain from the separate consideration of either. It was this view surely that Thomas caught when, beholding the risen Christ, he said, "My God and my Lord"; and that Stephen held when, dying, he exclaimed, "Lord Jesus, receive my soul." It must have been this conception that

led to the conversion of Saul. Had the Christians but deemed Christ a prophet, his ire had not been kindled; but "they called on His name," offering Him the Divine honours of prayer and praise. This rivalry of Jehovah was intolerable to the monotheistic disciple of Gamaliel; and it was only when, from the shekinah radiance, the voice of Jesus sounded forth that he recognized His unity with the Father, addressing Him in the language of supplication. If one were to seek to illustrate the way in which "the only-begotten Son declared" the invisible Father, one might describe a king anxious to reveal his true character to distant subjects who knew little more of him than his name. Adopting a peasant's garb, he takes up his abode in their midst, living as one of themselves. A certain noble air is noticed but unexplained; and what he has to say on political themes, on the character and desires of the king, indicate a knowledge out of keeping with his lowly station. A band of staunch friends gathers about him, to whom his discourse is yet fuller on court themes, concerning which they felt so great curiosity and knew so little; but most of all are they drawn to him by the kindness and integrity of his nature. Speaking of the purposes of the monarch, one of his hearers exclaims: "Would that you were king!" and he makes answer, "I am; I and the king are one; he that hath seen me hath seen the king." Great is their astonishment and joy. At last he returns by toilsome route to his palace and throne, leaving the most loyal of subjects, to whom he promises tokens of his regard and a kindly welcome when their local claims shall set them free to repair to the royal city. Was it not thus with regard to Christ? Did He not come, having "taken on Him the form of a servant," to reveal the Divine love and sanctity by His life and death. Puzzled His followers were, as they saw one whose power was that of God, and whom they may have feared to love better than God; what relief when they find that He is God, that they can approach Him without dread and worship Him without idolatry. So the relationship of God to Christ is seen at last to be that of essential unity.

And yet does not Paul, looking far into the future with prophetic glance, speak of Christ's subordination to the Father in a way that would appear to deny equality and essential unity. His words are: "And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 28). Is not the teaching of this passage to the effect that the period will come when the incarnation, the Divine self-expression in the Logos, will have fully accomplished its purpose; and that, as we have seen God in Christ, so then we shall see Christ in God? May it not mean, that our knowledge of the great King will be so complete that He will lay His peasant garb aside? But having thought of God's relation to Christ, and found it unity, we consider *His relation to redemption*, and find it that of Redeemer. "God so loved the world." Some have regarded Him as in wrath, seeking the destruction of the world; our text represents Him as in compassion, seeking its redemption. Nor let any presume to limit the objects of His pity. If elect world had been meant, it would have been expressed. Then would not Christ have said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," or in some cases the torture would have been worse than that of Tantalus—the water of Life rising to the very lips, only to subside untasted. "That He gave His only begotten Son." Did He love Himself better than His Son, that He gave Him to suffer? or did He love the world better than His Son, that He gave Him for the world? are questions which cannot fail to arise in the minds of those who practically, if not avowedly, regard God and Christ as two distinct deities, but which meet their solution in the declared unity of the Father and Son. In the light of this fact we do not hesitate to allow that He loved the world better than His Son, for He loved it better than Himself, and we behold in the sufferings of Jesus the self-sacrifice of God.

This was plainly the conception of Paul when (Acts xx. 28) he speaks, in his address to the Ephesian elders, of "the

Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood" (a reading which carries the authority of the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS.). "That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"—in Him, not in His message merely, as must have been stated had He been but a messenger; but in Him as "the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person;" in Him as a holy yet tender God, revealing in the vicarious sufferings of Calvary His hatred to sin and love to the sinner.

To understand the fulness of this sublime text is indeed impossible. The snow-peaked mountain is the most conspicuous feature in the landscape, smitten by the earliest beam of morning, left by the latest glow of sunset; but it is the most inaccessible, the most difficult to delineate, to paint. Its pale delicate tints, the soft shadows thrown by the rounded snow, the matchless sheen of the summit, are inimitable. But though the cottager may be unable to scale, or compass, or paint the mountain, he may admire it in its changeless form but ever varied beauty; he may build his home on its lower slopes, and may drink of the stream that rises amidst its dissolving snows. Like such a mountain, our text towers upward from the plains of Revelation, conspicuous, beautiful, with sheen of sanctity and tints of tenderness; but its summit, how impossible to scale; its base, how impossible to compass; its glories, how impossible to delineate, to describe; yet may we, as so many have done in past generations, admire its exquisite loveliness and grandeur, build on its vast slopes, finding a foundation of rock, and drink of the water of life, clear as crystal, that flows down from the meltings of Divine love. SEPTIMUS MARCH, B.A.

Southampton.

The Condescension of Christ.

'THEY MARVELLED THAT HE TALKED WITH THE WOMAN.'—*John iv. 27.*



HE Bible is a book of real pathos; it is full of strong, godlike, human feeling, not mere transient sentimentalism. In all the Bible there is no more pathetic story

than this. While dramatic in its force, it is tenderly pathetic in its spiritual poetry. Every incident leading up to our text is sketched by a master hand and reveals subtle traits of human character and feeling. Look at our text as illustrating the *Condescension of Jesus*.

I. *The NATURE of Christ's Condescension*. "He talked with the woman." The disciples marvelled, not so much that He talked with this woman, as that he talked to a woman at all: it was an objection, not upon the ground of her character, but upon the ground of her natural and social relationships to man. (a) *Christ talks to the WEAK*. Man is ready to be "always stronger on the strongest side." We like to be associated with the powerful and mighty. Jesus, is however, the Strong One Who links Himself to the weak. "The bruised reed He will not break," etc. "When we were without strength Christ died for us." Talk to those whom the world [regards as weak in social influence, weak in temporal advantages, weak in intellectual force, weak in spiritual aspiration. He loves us, not for what we are, but because of what He would have us be. (β) *Christ talks to the SLIGHTED*. In the East, woman is made to hold a very degraded and inferior position to that of man: the Oriental idea being, that she is not worth the study, the cultivation, the development, bestowed on man. Hence they coldly neglect and slight her. She relapses into a social drudge. Christ, by His conduct, aimed a decisive blow at this studied neglect. Many there are that look upon unregenerate man as a ruin hopelessly fallen, a vessel hopelessly wrecked, a bankrupt hopelessly impoverished. But Jesus condescends to our low estate and raises us up, makes us a temple for the dwelling of the Spirit, sends us forth as a vessel bound for an eternity of bliss, makes us rich with His spiritual gifts. We are too often the Priest and Levite who pass by on the other side; but Jesus is the "Good Samaritan" who comes down to heal, to bless, to save. (γ) *Christ talks to the DESPISED*. The slighting of woman led finally to her being despised. So soon does neglect lead to contempt. She became one who lived not for herself: her only purpose

in life was to minister to the gratification of her self-willed idol, man. The sense of cold indifference grew into a feeling of positive contempt. How different was the conduct of Jesus. He did not stand aloof, He did not despise her lowly, degraded condition. She had a soul to be won to God, to truth, to purity, to spiritual glory; and though all should condemn, He would win and bless. Christ saves the world's, the devil's castaways. "This man receiveth sinners." Examples: The penitent thief, Paul, Bunyan, Newton. He will receive you, poor, weak, slighted, despised, if you will but respond to the Divine love.

II. *The DEPTH of Christ's condescension.* "He TALKED with the woman." The word is expressive. It speaks of a free, familiar, unrestrained heart-to-heart intercourse. Though He were the Teacher sent from God, yet He lays aside His official dignity and *talks* to this despised Samaritan. When He spake to the doctors of the law in the Temple, it was with a set discourse; but now that He wishes to win a sin-convicted heart, He speaks closely, tenderly, familiarly. He talks (α) *Not PATRONIZINGLY*. Not as the teacher to his pupil, not as the lecturer to his class. There is no starchy officialism in Jesus Christ. Some men always try to make their hearers feel the contrast there is between themselves and their auditors, and how very condescending it is of them to speak at all; but Jesus speaks to us so as to set our souls at ease and make us feel that He is our Friend. (β) *Not REBUKINGLY*. Some are nothing unless severe. They love to level their puny mimic thunderbolts. They think it is theirs to usurp the vengeance of the Lord; they are for ever denouncing and scolding. But not so Jesus. He makes this woman her own accuser. She confesses her guilt ere He charges her with it. With an exquisite delicacy and tenderness, with a holy art and grace, He reveals her to herself, and by His goodness and loving-kindness wins her soul. (γ) *But FAMILIARLY*. He talks to her as He did to the troubled disciples on the sea, and reassured their trembling hearts (Mark vi. 50); as Paul did to the godly women who worshipped at Philippi by the river side,

filling their souls with spiritual joy (Acts xvi. 13); as the angel did to John in Patmos, when he revealed the spiritual glories of the Redeemed Church (Rev. xxi. 9). He talked to her as a loving father to the child he delights to cheer and bless; talked to her as One Who was and is a sympathetic high priest, tempted in all points like as we are. How deep, how intense, is the condescension of Jesus! Notice,—

III. *The EFFECT of Christ's condescension.* The disciples "marvelled." Not the wonder of admiration, but of simple surprise. They were filled with astonishment. Why? This conduct of Christ's was (a) *Contrary to their THOUGHTS*. They could not understand,—looking upon woman as mentally inferior to and unworthy of the notice of man,—they could not understand how that their Master, the Great Rabbi, should be so familiar with her. They had not yet learned that humility is spiritual dignity, that Christ was to conquer by bowing; and the cross, the emblem of shame and suffering, was to become a trophy of victory. Their Messiah was one who should rule in the commonly accepted sense—over the bodies and minds of men. They knew not yet in all its fulness, "My kingdom is not of this world." It was (β) *Contrary to their PREJUDICES*. Wrong principles, long entertained and encouraged, form prejudices. They looked upon such conduct as being opposed to long-standing customs and all their dearest modes of thought and feeling. "They marvelled." What power has prejudice to jaundice the eye and make discord in the ear! The grandest work of spiritual art is robbed of its beauty, the noblest strains of spiritual harmony deprived of their sweetness, by prejudice. Prejudice has cursed nations, stopped the progress of intellect, science, and religion, and was, even in Christ's day, taking upon itself the mental rebuke of the only Perfect Man. (γ) *Contrary to their PRACTICES*. As their thoughts gave a character to their prejudices, so their prejudices determined their practice. "As a man thinketh in his heart,"—and the heart is the seat of prejudice,—*"so is he."* If they could admire the conduct of Jesus, it would rebuke theirs in the past and change it for the future.


They must learn to call nothing common or unclean which bore the image, though marred, of the Divine Creator. They must learn a nobler, larger, religion—a religion which taught them that “in Jesus Christ there was neither male nor female, Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, but that they are all one.”

Let the Church of Christ but follow more closely the teaching of her Lord, and narrow prejudice shall give place to that godlike, generous condescension which lives, labours, suffers, and is ready to die if need be, in order to bless.

H. M.

The Increase of Faith.

“AND THE APOSTLES SAID UNTO THE LORD, INCREASE OUR FAITH.”—
Luke xvii. 5.

1.  HE context will show *the occasion* upon which the words of the text were used. The apostles did not for one moment question the authority of their great Teacher, nor did they presume to doubt the entire justice of the precept of forgiveness He had just given to them. They believed in Him, and they also believed the precept. But, seeing at once how large a demand the precept made, and feeling how weak their own faith was, they “said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.” Their case was one in which a distinction is to be drawn between *the actual want* of faith, and the *realization* of those objects upon which faith is fixed. Their case was one in which there *was* faith, but one in which faith needed strengthening and increasing.

2. And there are such cases every day, in our own day. We profess, and actually have, some measure of faith in God, Christ, the Scriptures, Immortality, Prayer, and the final triumph of Right and Truth over wrong and error. But in how many instances do we succeed in *realizing* these objects, until they stand out before us with a distinctness which excludes all doubt? The bare condemnation of doubt is a cheap and easy method by which some fancy it is to be got rid of. But bare condemnation of it never yet removed it,

and never will. Add to which fact this other, that he whose faith is at length the most intelligent, strong, and settled, must, ere he come into that state, feel doubt and grapple manfully with it. Christian faith was never yet attained by the ostrich trick of sticking one's head in the sand, under the impression that all is safe if you will but shut your eyes.

3. And yet the case of deficient faith, of that which is not a realized one, is a very sad case. Gradually, the objects of faith become more or less unreal; we as certainly lose faith in human nature; we become weak to do, and bear, and inquire; while a cold despair creeps over the life, and robs us of much of that warmth of feeling and hope which a man must have if he would work, and endure, and wait the results. Faith, by which of course I do not mean credulity, gives reality to "the things that are seen," and strengthens man's whole nature, "According to your faith be it unto you."

4. *Why* is it that the faith of a Christian is so frequently at a low ebb? The causes are manifold. Bodily ailments, giving a disproportionate regard to matters of doubt, forgetfulness that all evidence, except that which is mathematical, is a thing of degrees, are some of the causes. Secret sins, too, will sooner or later eat their way into and weaken the life of faith. Failing to draw a distinction between professors of Christianity and Christianity itself, is another cause. Dwelling too exclusively upon the merely beautiful aspects of things weakens faith. So too, if our faith, especially in Christianity, is a traditional one, held because others hold it, and because we have been taught to do the same, it must, in some fearful hour, prove its own weakness. Personal trials may be added to the list of causes which, while they ought not, do nevertheless weaken the faith of many.

5. Now, with these facts before him, what is an honest man to do? Is he to content himself with merely saying, "Oh that I could believe!" or with submission to his condition as an inevitable one; or with a selfish envying of the condition of those who can and do believe? No; mere wishes, stolid submission, and envy, will not work the cure. But let him,

first of all, understand and lay to heart the fact, that not perfect knowledge, but faith, is a settled condition of life, from which no man can escape, or ought so much as to wish to escape. Let him ask himself *what* it is he does really doubt. Let him further ask himself with perfect honesty *why* it is he doubts. Let him do what the apostles did in the case of our text, go straight to Christ, and hear what He has to say upon the matter, and open himself to the influences which will stream in from Christ upon his whole being, if he will but open himself for their reception. Finally, let him pray honest prayers to God, for teaching, for guidance, for support. Then, as certain as is the law of sowing and reaping, of cause and effect, his faith will not pass into perfect knowledge, but it *will* increase, and become a vital abiding thing to him. He will still "know in part," but he *will* know; while what he knows not now, experience will gradually reveal to him.

New Swindon.

F. R. YOUNG.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

Spiritual Paternity.

"FOR THOUGH YE HAVE TEN THOUSAND INSTRUCTORS IN CHRIST, YET HAVE YE NOT MANY FATHERS: FOR IN CHRIST JESUS I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU THROUGH THE GOSPEL."—1 Cor. iv. 15.

THE subject of these words is *spiritual paternity*, and three remarks are suggested:—

I. THAT ONE MAN MAY BECOME THE SPIRITUAL FATHER OF ANOTHER. What is it to become the spiritual father of another? (1) Something more than to become the father of one's ideas. There are men in society gifted with that

intellectual vitality and vigour which enables them to generate the leading ideas in the minds of their contemporaries. This they do by their conversation, their speeches, their writings. But these are not spiritual fathers, they are mere schoolmasters or teachers. Coleridge and Carlyle are examples of this. A spiritual father is (2) Something more than the author of a certain style of thinking. There are men in society who not only generate leading thoughts in the minds of their contemporaries, but, what is perhaps

something higher, a style of thinking—a style characterized by precision, freshness, and force. Aristotle, Bacon, etc., are examples. But a spiritual father is one who is the father of man's MORAL CHARACTER, one who generates in another his own spirit, sympathies, and aims, one who transforms the character of another into his own image.

Another remark suggested is:—

II. THAT THE NOBLEST SPIRITUAL FATHER IS HE WHO BEGETS IN ANOTHER THE CHRISTLY CHARACTER. Many are the moral characters prevalent amongst men—the sensual, the sceptical, the selfish. The Christly character stands in sublime contrast to these; it is *disinterested, spiritual, divine*.

First: The man who generates in others this character *imparts the highest good*. In the Christly character is harmony, kingdom, and Paradise. To be like Christ, is the highest end of being, it is the *summum bonum* of souls.

Secondly: The man who generates this character in others *creates the highest mutual affection*. Far deeper and profounder is the affection subsisting between the spiritual father and his offspring than that which exists between the physical. Christ recognised this when He said, "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and

my mother." Paul called Timothy his "beloved son;" and elsewhere he speaks with inexpressible tenderness of his converts as his little children with whom he travailed in birth (Gal. iv. 10).

Another remark suggested is:—

III. THAT THE CHRISTLY CHARACTER IS ONLY BEGOTTEN IN OTHERS BY THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. "I have begotten you through the Gospel." *Natural religion* cannot do it, Judaism cannot do it, Mohammedanism cannot do it, heathenism cannot do it; no speculative creeds, no moral codes, no ritualistic religions can do it. The Gospel alone is the power to generate in man the true Christly character; it is that transformative glass into which as we look we get changed into the same image from "glory to glory."

CONCLUSION:—Learn from this,—

First: *The supreme interest of man*. What is that? Learning, wealth, fame? No, *Christliness*. He who has this, has everything, all things are His. He who has not this, has "nothing," says Paul.

Learn,—

Secondly: *The grandest distinctions amongst men*. What are they? Sages, soldiers, sovereigns? No. *Spiritual sires*. The man who generates in another the Christly character, has done a greater work than any sage as sage, king

asking, has ever done. Every man may and ought to become a spiritual father.

The Responsibility of Man for the Inevitable.

"THEN SAID HE UNTO THE DISCIPLES, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE BUT THAT OFFENCES WILL COME: BUT WOE UNTO HIM, THROUGH WHOM THEY COME!"
—*Luke xvii. 1.*

THE subject of these words is the responsibility of man for the inevitable. It seems at first an outrage on justice for a moral creature to be held responsible for that which is inevitable. A few remarks however may illustrate this.

I. It is "impossible" for certain PHYSICAL conduct not to produce certain PHYSICAL misery. From the unalterable laws of nature, physical sufferings must follow habits of intemperance, indolence, and sensual indulgences. But woe to them by whom these things come. They are responsible for the conduct, the consequences are inevitable.

II. It is "impossible" for certain PARENTAL conduct not to produce certain PARENTAL distress. "Train up a child in the way he should go" when he is young; "and when he is old he will not depart from it." The great philosopher Locke says, "that all the men we meet with are what they are, useful or not, good or bad, according to their education." If parents give, by their conversation and ex-

ample, to their children ideas of life that lead to self-indulgence, falsehood and fraud, worldliness and infidelity; the conduct of their children, should they live, will torture their hearts and bring down their grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. This will be all but inevitable, but woe unto the parents on account of their conduct; they might and ought to have acted otherwise.

III. It is "impossible" for a certain SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT not to produce certain NATIONAL misery. Unequal laws, unjust taxation, heartless despotism, official insolence in rulers must inevitably bring suffering and anarchy amongst a people. From such conduct in rulers have always come ruin in thunder and with blood. Babylon, Greece, Rome, and Turkey at the present moment, are examples. But woe unto the rulers by whom the offences come; they should have acted otherwise.

IV. It is "impossible" for certain MORAL conduct not to produce in ITS AUTHORS certain misery. "The wages of sin is death." Every wrong volition and act must bring with it death in some form or other, must deaden the moral sensibilities, enfeeble the moral powers, weaken self-respect. It is inevitable that moral woes should tread on the heel of sin. Woe unto the man who sins.

CONCLUSION: Though you cannot avoid the inevitable, you can avoid the causes. In this respect you may be masters of your destiny. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able."

The Esteemed of Man and Abhorred of God.

"THAT WHICH IS HIGHLY ESTEEMED AMONG MEN IS ABOMINATION IN THE SIGHT OF GOD."—*Luke xvi. 15.*

THIS language applies to many things on earth.

I. To WORLDLY SUCCESS. The merchant who amasses the largest fortune, the journalist who obtains the largest circulation, the king who wins the largest empire, the preacher who gets the largest congregation, all are highly esteemed amongst men. Men worship success, by whatever means it is obtained. Your Hudsons, your Grants, your Disraelis—they won success. But the Great Judge is often indignant with the most brilliant achievements and successes of men. He looks to the heart. The language applies,—

II. To DAZZLING PAGEANTRY. Men highly esteem the gorgeous and the grand, the glitter and the glare. Royal processions, civic banquets, ecclesiastical parades, these are highly esteemed amongst men; the people, even the

starving crowds, stand in rapt admiration in the presence of those glittering bubbles. But what are they to the Great One?

The language applies,—

III. To CONVENTIONAL RELIGION. What is conventional religion? It is a corruption of Christianity; it is Christianity accommodated to the vulgar ideas and sentiments of mankind. It appeals to the sentiment of revenge; hence it preaches literal substitution. It appeals to selfishness; hence the burden of its teaching is heaven and hell. It appeals to its sensuousness; hence most of its popular sermons, hymns, and ceremonies are addressed to the senses. All this is highly esteemed amongst men. Spiritual Christianity, which "knows no man after the flesh," not even Christ, is unpopular. But the conventional is in high favour, its followers crowd our largest cathedrals and conventicles; but to the Great One it must be an abomination. He says, "to what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices?" etc., etc. (*Isa. i. 11-15*).

CONCLUSION: Let it be ours to ignore and repudiate those things which the world pursues, and to appreciate and adopt those things which God esteems. "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." "Is not this the fast that I

have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke." "The grace of God by salvation hath appeared to every man, teaching us that, denying ungodliness, we should live soberly and righteously in this ungodly world."

Notes on the Apostles' Creed.—6. "Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary."

"GOD SENT FORTH HIS SON, MADE OF A WOMAN."—Gal. iv. 4.

THIS sentence of the Creed, and these words of Paul, contain the double truth, each half of which is fully taught in many separate Scriptures.

That it is a profound mystery, is no reason against its holding the foremost place in a true religion. It is the mystery in nature's rose and lily that marks their Divine origin, in contrast with the easily understood wax flowers of man's making. Mystery is the signature of Divinity. This mystery of the Union of the Divine and Human Nature of Jesus Christ:—

I. MEETS, BUT TRANSCENDS HUMAN EXPECTATION. The hopes of the world for a Divinely human Deliverer were strong and multiform, though confused. (1) Such as the Hindus looked for—*incarnations of God*. But their in-

carnations meant the degradation to human lusts and cruelties; so that the lives of such gods were "mingled murder and prostitution."

(2) Such as the Greeks looked for—an *apotheosis of man*. Heroes grew up into gods, and were lost in the maze of divinity. (3) The Christian truth reveals God as manifesting Himself in a human nature that *perfectly preserves its humanness through all*.

II. FULFILLS OLD TESTAMENT PREDICTION.

In Him is the child born, and the Everlasting Father, Isaiah predicts; the Son of Man and Ancient of Days of Ezekiel, the Emanuel, etc.

III. RECORDED IN THE ACCOUNT OF HIS BIRTH.

The angel's message to Joseph and to Mary bears this burden. So does Elizabeth's song, for she calls Mary the mother of "my Lord." And John's philosophic record tells of "the Word made flesh."

IV. HARMONIZES WITH HIS SUBSEQUENT BIOGRAPHY.

(1) His own declarations. His favourite name, "Son of Man;" His acceptance, even though He died for it, of "Son of God." (2) The acts recorded of Him. On every page the Divine and human elements lie side by side, are interwoven and intertwined. There is weariness and almightiness in the Galilean storm; weeping and omnipotence at the grave at

Bethany; dying, and yet power to save and to raise others, at Calvary.

V. TAUGHT IN NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES GENERALLY. (See earlier notes on "Only begotten Son.")

Belief in this means,—

First: *Belief in the love of God.* It all means the love of God that identifies itself with us, and shrinks from no humiliation or sacrifice for us. "Herein is love."

Second: *The sanctity of human nature.* Not the mind only, but the body has been the shrine of the Divine. Whatever humanity lost in

Adam, it was crowned again in Christ. His life was the transfiguration of human nature. Beware of dishonouring it.

Third: *The ideal of human life.* The Incarnation is both an illustration of that ideal, and is the means of attaining it. It tells of the descent of God to man, and the ascent of man to God. It proclaims and illustrates and renders possible reconciliation, communion, sonship. For "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself."

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

SENSUALITY.—Very strongly does the world's legislation express the point which true philosophy and all experience confirm, viz., that sensuality is necessarily injurious to the soul. It is a fire that cauterizes the conscience, a hell-blast that scathes the moral powers. I read everywhere, in every law and faculty of the soul, on every page of history, as well as in every part of Christ's teaching, that if ye live after the flesh ye shall die.

THE POSSESSORS OF THE EARTH.—Who is the man that most truly inherits the earth? Not the man of an ambitious and restless spirit, though he may call a million acres his own. Such a man has no spirit home: his soul roams through his estates, like the unclean spirit in the desert, seeking rest, but finding none. It is the man of holy meekness that *inherits* the earth. Though on legal grounds he has no claim to a foot of soil, he feels a vital interest and a spiritual property in all. He is the master of himself. He can sit upon the throne of his own being, can bid his intellect turn the phenomena of the universe into joyous realms of thought; his heart, the wide earth into a temple of devotion; and his faith, the fiercest roar of the elements into music. He *inherits* the earth, feels at home in all, appropriates all, makes all serve the high end of his being.

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts! and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths of the most vital interest and universal application.

Micah calls himself a Morasthite because he was a native of Morshethgath, a small town of Judea. He prophesied in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah, and his prophetic mission commenced soon after that of Isaiah. He was contemporary with him as well as with Hosea and Amos. His prophecies were directed to Samaria, the capital city of Israel, also to Jerusalem. Hence we find denunciations against Samaria mingled with prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem. One of his predictions, it seems, saved the life of Jeremiah, who would have been put to death for foretelling the destruction of the Temple, had not Micah foretold the same thing one hundred years before.

The book is commonly distributed into three sections: chaps. i. and ii., chaps. iii. to v., chaps. vi. and vii. Each of these opens with a summons to hear God's message, and then proceeds with exhortations and threatenings, which are succeeded by glorious promises.

His style is bold, fiery, and abrupt, and has not a little of the poetic grandeur of Isaiah. His sudden transitions from one subject to another often make his writings difficult to decipher.

MICAH.

No. CCLI.

Man's Ruin the Fruit of his own Conduct.

"NOTWITHSTANDING THE LAND SHALL BE DESOLATE BECAUSE OF THEM THAT DWELL THEREIN, FOR THE FRUIT OF THEIR DOINGS."—*Micah vii. 13.*

HERE is a prediction of what would take place before the advent of those glorious events pointed out in the preceding verses. There will be a dark night before the morning, a great storm before the calm.

The subject here is, *man's ruin the fruit of his own conduct.* The reason why the land should be "desolate" before the coming of the glorious times is here stated, "for the fruit of their doings." That man's ruin springs

from his conduct is demonstrated by universal experience as well as by the word of God, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself. O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity." It is the man who heareth the sayings of Christ and doeth them not that will be ruined at last. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Assuming it to be a fact that man's ruin is evermore the fruit of his own conduct, three things must follow:—

I. That HIS MISERY WILL BE IDENTIFIED WITH REMORSE. Morally it is impossible for a man to ascribe his ruin to his organization, to circumstances, or to any force over which he has no control. He must feel that

he has brought it on himself; and this feeling it is that gives hell to his miserable condition. The suffering of remorse is the soul of suffering. "A wounded spirit who can bear?"

Another thing follows:—

II. THAT IN HIS SUFFERINGS HE MUST VINDICATE THE DIVINE CHARACTER. Forced to see and feel that all his sin and miseries spring from his own conduct, he will be compelled to say, "Just and right art Thou," etc. Into the deepest heart of such God speaks the words, "they hated knowledge, they despised all my reproof, therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way and be filled with their own devices." All their misery is but the eating of the fruit of their own doings, they reap that which they have sown. As fruit answers to seed, as echoes to sound, their calamities answer to their conduct.

Another thing follows:—

III. THAT HIS SALVATION FROM RUIN REQUIRES A CHANGE OF LIFE. Men's conduct is fashioned and ruled by their likings and dislikings, their sympathies and antipathies; in other words, if their conduct is bad, it can only be made good by a change of heart. "Marvel not that I said unto you, ye must be born again."

Another thing follows:—

IV. THAT CHRISTIANITY IS THE ONLY SYSTEM THAT CAN MEET HIS CASE. The mission of Christianity is to change the heart, to renew the life, and effect a spiritual reformation. This it is *designed* to do, this it is *fitted* to do, this it has done, this it is doing; and no other system on earth is capable of accomplishing this work.

No. CCLII.

A Prayer.

"FEED THY PEOPLE WITH THY ROD, THE FLOCK OF THINE HERITAGE, WHICH DWELL SOLITARILY IN THE WOOD, IN THE MIDST OF CARMEL: LET THEM FEED IN BASHAN AND GILEAD, AS IN THE DAYS OF OLD."—*Micah* vii. 14.

HERE is a prayer addressed by the prophet to Almighty God. It is brief but beautiful, beautiful in spirit and style. It has a prophetic aspect. This prayer recognizes three things,—

I. AN INTERESTING RELATION BETWEEN GOD AND HIS PEOPLE, flock and Shepherd. The Jews, here as elsewhere, are metaphorically referred to as a flock, and Jehovah as their Shepherd. Psalms lxxx. 1, xc. 2 etc., "The Lord is my Shepherd." "I am the good Shepherd." What a Shepherd is He!

First: He is the *Absolute Owner* of the flock. "My sheep are mine and I know them." "All souls are mine." How incalculably valuable is one soul!—a free, ever active, influential, undying spirit. How rich is this Shepherd, to own untold millions of such!

Secondly: He has a *perfect knowledge* of the flock. He knows what they are, what they have been, what they will be through all the future. "I know My sheep," etc.

Thirdly: He has an *infinite love* for the flock. The Good Shepherd hath laid down His life for them.

Fourthly: He has *abundant supplies* for the flock. Though their wants are varied, numerous, urgent, ever recurring, He is able to meet them all. "I give unto My sheep eternal life,

neither shall any pluck them out of My hands." "He is able to do exceeding abundantly, more than we can ask or think." "Feed Thy people with Thy rod," or staff.

It recognises,—

II. THE TRYING CONDITION IN WHICH GOD'S PEOPLE ARE SOMETIMES FOUND. "Which dwell solitarily in the wood, in the midst of Carmel."

The primary reference is to their captivity in Babylon. They were as sheep in the forest or the wood; in danger of being lost in the thickets or being devoured by beasts of prey. Human souls in this world are in a moral wilderness; beset with perils on every hand. "They are scattered on the mountains as sheep having no shepherd." Two facts render this condition peculiarly distressing.

First: It is *caused* by self. Souls have not been driven away into moral captivity. "All we like sheep have gone astray."

Secondly: It is *undeliverable* by self. No soul ever found its way back to God by its own unaided efforts; hence Christ came to "seek and to save the lost."

It recognises,—

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF RESTORATION TO FORMER ENJOYMENTS. "Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old." The regions of Bashan and Gilead, on the east of the Jordan, were celebrated for their rich pasturage, and on this account were chosen by the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh (Num. xii. ; Deut. iii. 17).

Morally, the great need of man is the restoration of normal rights, normal virtues, normal enjoyments.

"Good Shepherd, hasten Thou
that glorious day,
When we shall all
In the one fold abide with Thee
for aye!"

No. CCLIII.

The Ultimate Deliverance of Man from Sin.

"ACCORDING TO THE DAYS OF THY COMING OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT WILL I SHOW UNTO HIM MARVELLOUS THINGS. THE NATIONS SHALL SEE AND BE CONFOUNDED AT ALL THEIR MIGHT: THEY SHALL LAY THEIR HAND UPON THEIR MOUTH, THEIR EARS SHALL BE DEAF. THEY SHALL LICK THE DUST LIKE A SERPENT, THEY SHALL MOVE OUT OF THEIR HOLES LIKE WORMS OF THE EARTH: THEY SHALL BE AFRAID OF THE LORD OUR GOD, AND SHALL FEAR BECAUSE OF THEE."—*Micah* vii. 15-17.

IN this passage there is an answer to the prophet's prayer. It contains a Divine assurance that wonders analogous to those displayed in the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt would be vouchsafed in their deliverance from Babylonish captivity; and that the display of those wonders would lead to the utter confusion and ruin of the "nations" who were their enemies. They would feel that all their strength was contemptible impotence in the presence of God's great power.

This deliverance, thus described, resembles the ultimate deliverance of man from sin and ruin in two respects.

I. It involves THE EXHIBITION OF THE MARVELLOUS. There were "marvellous things" shown when the Hebrews were

delivered from Egypt; marvellous things when they were brought out of Babylonian captivity; but these marvellous things are but mere shadows of the marvels displayed in the moral redemption of mankind. The *incarnation of Christ*—the wonders that His mighty hand performed—the extraordinary phenomena connected with His death, His resurrection, and ascension to heaven; the revolutions in the moral character and institutions of mankind: all these are, in truth, the wonders of the wonderful, the marvels of the marvellous.

II. IT INVOLVES THE CONFUSION OF ENEMIES. "The nations shall be confounded at their might, they shall lay their hand upon their mouth," etc. As Egypt and Babylon were confounded, humbled, and terrified at God's marvels in their deliverance, so will all the spiritual foes of Christ be ultimately overwhelmed at the wonders displayed at the redemption of the world. Matthew Henry's remarks on this passage are worth remark. "(1) Those that had exulted over the people of God in their distress, and gloried that when they had them down, they would keep them down, shall be confounded when they see them thus surprisingly rising up: they shall be confounded at all the might with which the captives shall now exert themselves, whom they thought for ever disabled. They shall now lay their hands upon their mouths as being ashamed of what they have said and not be able to say any more by way of triumph over Israel. Nay, their ears shall be deaf too, so much that they shall be

ashamed at the wonderful deliverance: they shall stop their ears as being not willing to hear any more of God's wonders, wrought for that people whom they had so despised and insulted over. (2) Those that had impudently confronted God Himself shall now be struck with a fear of Him, and thereby brought, in profession at least, to submit to Him. They shall lick the dust like a serpent; they shall be so mortified, as if they were to be sentenced to the same curse the serpent was laid under (Gen. iii. 14). They shall be brought to the lowest abasements imaginable, and shall be so dispirited that they shall tamely submit to them. They shall lick the dust of the Church's feet (Isa. xlix. 3). Proud oppressors shall be made sensible how mean and little they are before the great God; and they shall with trembling and the lowest submission move out of the holes into which they had crept, like worms of the earth as they are, being ashamed and afraid to show their heads; so low shall they be brought and such abjects shall they be when they are abased. When God did wonders for His Church, many of the people of the land became Jews because the fear of the Jews and of their God fell on them (Esth. viii. 17). So it is promised here, that they shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and shall fear because of Thee, O Israel! Forced submissions are often feigned submissions: yet they redound to the glory of God and the Church, though not to the benefit of the dissemblers themselves."

Biblical Criticism.

Proper Names formed from the Names of Heathen Deities.

IT is not only among the people of God, the professors of the only true religion, that we find the practice prevalent of constructing proper names from the names and titles peculiar to Deity. In the records of all the heathen nations of antiquity, names occur compounded of the names of the idols or false gods which they worshipped. Scripture affords some instances in its mention of foreign personages. Of these the most conspicuous are the names partly composed of Baal and Nebo. Baal was the name or title of a god very extensively worshipped for many ages in the countries lying between the rivers of Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean Sea. He was regarded with special reverence by the Phœnicians as their titular deity, and is often named in conjunction with Ashtaroth, a goddess of the Zidonians, a Phœnician people. He was also the chief god of the Amorites, or Canaanitish nations whose land was occupied by the people of Israel; and hence the earliest idolatry of the Israelites, after they had taken possession of Canaan, was the worship of Baal. But even while in the wilderness they had been seduced, by their intercourse with the Moabites and Midianites, into the worship of this deity under his title Baal Peor. He seems to have been peculiarly the god of the Midianites, being repeatedly mentioned in close connection with them. The proximity of the Moabites and Midianites to the land of Seir, the territory of the descendants of Edom which lay between the regions inhabited by these two nations, may account for the fact that the earliest mention of a person named after Baal occurs in a list of the "kings who reigned in the land of Edom before there reigned any king over the children of Israel" (Gen. xxxvi. 31, 38). This is Baal hanan the son of Achbor. In his name, it will be immediately observed, the word *hanan* is compounded with Baal in the same way that it is with El and Jah in El-hanan

or Johanan; and it means, "Baal hath graciously given," or, "the grace of Baal." In a much later age we meet with the name of Ethbaal as that of the king of the Zidonians whose daughter, the notorious Jezebel, became the wife of Ahab, king of Israel, and, by her pernicious influence over her husband, established among his people the worship of Baal. *Eth*, in Ethbaal, is the word which is compounded with *El* in Ithiel, and with *Jah* in Ittai. In both these words it has, according to the opinion of most critics, the sense of *with*; so that they mean, "with God," "with Jehovah," *with* being understood to signify *by the aid of*—a sense which the corresponding preposition has very commonly in the Greek language, when joined with the word God in the name of any particular deity. Some, however, interpret Ithiel, "God is with me," which gives an actual meaning very nearly allied to the former, though the sense of *with* varies considerably. But the certain meaning of Ittai,—clearly a synonymous word,—seems to determine that of Ithiel. And analogy is in favour of this interpretation. The words of Eve on the birth of Cain, "I have gotten a man from the Lord," are literally *Eth Jehovah*, "with (or by aid of) Jehovah;" and it was said of Enoch and Noah, that they walked with God, *ethbaalohim*. Jacob, remonstrating with Laban, says, "Thou knowest how thy cattle was (fared) with me"—*itti*, that is by means of me, or under my care. Ethbaal therefore means, "by the aid of Baal," expressing, as in the case of Eve, the acknowledgment of parents to Baal for the gift of a son, or a dedication of the child to Baal, to be placed under his aid and protection. A third nation, the Chaldean,—far more remote than the two former from Palestine, but closely connected with the people of Israel, both in their origin and in the later period of the Old Testament history,—afford several instances of the use of the name of this god, as well as of other deities, in proper names. The king of Babylon who sent a complimentary message to Hezekiah, was Merodach Baladan, son of Baladan. The word Baladan signifies, "Baal is lord;" *adan* being identical with *adon* in Hebrew, and the name precisely corresponding to Adonijah, "Jehovah is

Lord." The name of the last king of the Chaldeans was Belshazzar. This word and Belteshazzar, the name given to Daniel at the Babylonish court, both signify "Bel is king (chief, that is prince) of kings;" or possibly the meaning is, Prince of Bel. Bel is a form of Baal which we meet with in the writings of Isaiah and Jeremiah: for example, "Bel cometh down" (Isa. xlv. 1), "Bel is confounded," "I will punish Bel in Babylon" (Jer. l. 2; li. 44).

The word Baal means *lord*, in the sense of master or owner; and is thus freely employed on ordinary occasions in the Old Testament writings. And the words above mentioned, with which it is found compounded in heathen names, are also the same, or nearly so, with Hebrew words. The fact is, that the Hebrew language is almost identical with the Phœnician, or old Canaanitish language, and has a close affinity with that of the Chaldeans and the Assyrians. In the case of the Assyrian tongue, the belief in this affinity, long entertained by most Oriental scholars, has been remarkably corroborated by numerous inscriptions on monuments and tablets recently discovered in Mesopotamia. And as a considerable portion of the prophecies of Daniel is written in the Chaldean dialect of his age, a comparison between this dialect and the Hebrew is easily made, and satisfactorily proves their relationship. The names of many places, as well as persons, and various ancient testimonies prove that the people of Phœnicia, the Syrians, and the Zidonians spoke the same language as the inhabitants of Canaan, and that this was the same with Hebrew, or a cognate dialect. The identity of the Canaanitish with the Phœnician language is what we might expect from the genealogy of the patriarchs of these races recorded in Gen. x., where it is said that "Canaan begat Sidon his first-born, and Heth," etc., etc.; "and afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad. And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest unto Sodom." The correspondence of the Hebrew, which is a Semitic language, with the Phœnician or Canaanitish, which is Hamitic, may be more

difficult to account for; but it is a fact that cannot be doubted. Indeed, according to Mr. Rawlinson the ancient Chaldean dialect spoken about the time of Abraham had greater analogy with the Hamitic dialects than with any other, though it was a mixture of the four great varieties of human speech.

The Carthaginians, so well known to all readers of Roman history as the greatest rivals of Rome, were a Phœnician colony, hence their name *Pœni* and the adjective *Punic*, which is used as equivalent to *Carthaginian*. The names of several of their distinguished commanders offer examples of the use of the name of the Phœnician deity *Baal*, in the construction of proper names, and at the same time afford proof of the relationship of their language to Hebrew. It is somewhat remarkable, that the name of the greatest Carthaginian general, the celebrated *Hannibal*, exists in Scripture. It is the same with *Baal-hanan*, the Edomitish sovereign, and means, "grace of *Baal*," or, "*Baal* has graciously given;" the position of the name of the god being reversed, as in the case of many synonymous names in Hebrew. The two names are the same in meaning, just as *Jo-hanan* and *Hanan-iah* are the same, or *El-hanan* and *Hanan-el*. *Hasdrubal*, the name of *Hannibal*'s brother, is similarly composed of the word *Baal* and a word which is evidently the same with *azar* or *azri* in *Azar-iah*, *Azri-el*, and means, "*Baal* hath helped," or, "help of *Baal*." This name also occurs reversed in *Baleasar*, recorded by *Josephus* as that of the son of *Hiram* king of *Tyre*, the friend and ally of *David* and *Solomon*. The father of *Hiram*, according to the same authority, was *Abibal*, a name which means, "*Baal* (is my) father;" as *Abijah* means, "*Jehovah* (is my) father." Also among the kings of *Tyre* two are named *Ithobal*, which is the same as *Eth-baal*, father of *Jezebel*. Another, who reigned about five centuries before our era, was called *Merbal*. This is the same as *Maherbal*, a Carthaginian name which occurs in Roman history and has probably its corresponding Hebrew name in *Maharai*, one of *David*'s captains. Its meaning is, "*Baal* is speeding," or "*Speed* thou, O *Baal*," as that of *Maharai* is, "*Jehovah* is speeding," or "*Speed* (thou), *Jehovah*." *Maher*,

it will be remarked, is the first word in the long name Maher-shalal-hash-baz (Isa. viii. 1-3), where it has the signification of making speed, or speedy. We find the word Baal, in a few cases, forming the whole or a part of an Israelitish name. Two persons are recorded as bearing the name of Baal, one a Benjamite, brother of the grandfather of Saul; and the other a Reubenite, who lived just before the captivity of the ten tribes. When thus used as the whole name, it may be certainly understood in its common sense of lord, or master; but when Baal is part of a compound name, it is undoubtedly the name of the heathen god. The first person who had such a name among the Israelites was Gideon (breaker or cutter down), to whom it was applied as a surname in the ancient sense of the term, and in whose case such an explanation is given of the origin and meaning the word or phrase thus employed as may throw light on two similar names which afterwards occur. Gideon received the name Jerubbaal from the brief but spirited and successful defence which his father Joash made of his conduct in throwing down the altar of Baal: "Will ye plead for Baal? he said; "will ye save him? . . . if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar. Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal [let Baal plead], saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar" (Judges vi. 31, 32). This name is mentioned afterwards as the well-known name of Gideon, with the variation Jerubbesheth (2 Sam. xi. 21). Now *beseth*, thus substituted for *Baal*, means "shame," "disgrace," "shameful or base thing;" and, according to an ordinary practice of the writers of the Old Testament, is employed contemptuously to denote an idol. It is used by Jeremiah and Hosea as synonymous with Baal; "Ye have set up altars to that *shameful thing*, (even) altars to burn incense to Baal" (Jer. xi. 13). "They went to Baal-peor, and separated themselves unto that *shame*" (Hos. ix. 10).

At a later period, in the reign of David and in the family of Saul, this same word is found making part of the names of two persons, both conspicuous in the sacred history—Ishbo-

sheth the son of Saul, who succeeded his father as king of Israel, and Mephibosheth his nephew, son of Jonathan. But each of these is in the Book of Chronicles called by a different name; in which *baal* is substituted for *bosheth*; Ishbosheth becomes Esh-baal; and Mephibosheth Merib-baal. From the analogy of Jerub-baal it seems reasonable to suppose that the termination *baal*, though recorded only in the genealogies of the book of later date, was the original termination of each name. In common discourse the conventional equivalent, *bosheth*, would be adopted; and the name would naturally be so reported in the historical book which repeatedly has occasion to mention it. The relation of *merib* to *mephi*, in the latter of these two names, is uncertain, as the derivation of *mephi* is doubtful. But Merib-baal is certainly of kindred signification with Jerub-baal; the word *merib*,—familiar to all readers of the Bible in the form *meribah*, as meaning “contention,”—being a participle of the same verb of which *jerub* is a tense. So that Jonathan probably gave his son the name to intimate a defiance of idols and idol worshippers, after the example of Joash, varying the notion Jerub-baal, “let Baal plead,” or contend, by Merib-baal, “contender against Baal.” *Mephi* is interpreted by some as having the sense “destroyer, exterminator,” by which the same resolution and defiance would be expressed in somewhat stronger language. It is much more difficult to account for the name Ishbosheth, “man of shame,” or Esh-baal, “man of Baal;” the latter word, if it formed the name of a heathen, would be understood to denote dedication to Baal; but it could not have been employed in this sense as the name of a son of Saul, born soon after the time when he was appointed king over Israel. And it seems quite impracticable to extract from it any signification allied to that of Jerub-baal or Merib-baal, involving a sentiment of hostility to the false god and his worship. Nor can the word *baal* be supposed to have represented in general apprehension any other personage than the deity so called, since its interchange with *bosheth* certainly indicates its application to that deity. A conjecture may however be hazarded which affords a not

entirely impossible solution of the difficulty. This fourth son of Saul was born perhaps four or five years after Saul most unexpectedly became the first king of Israel. His name may have been given him by his mother,—a circumstance of which many examples exist,—and may have been intended to mark the high dignity recently attained by her husband. *Ish* is “husband” as well as “man;” and *baal* is “lord” or “master,” as well as “husband.” *Ish-baal*, then, may mean “(my) husband is lord,”—just as *Ebimelech* means “God,” or “my God is king;” or *Abner*, “his father is Ner,”—*baal* being used as a higher family title than *ish*; or with reference to Saul’s lordship, dominion, and right of ownership in regard to the people of Israel. It is very remarkable that the next superior in age of the sons of Saul, *Malchishua*, bears a name in the composition of which the word, for king (*malchi*, from *melek*,) has part. If he was born three years before his brother *Ish-baal*, his name, given so soon after his father’s accession to the throne, would appear to be still more distinctly an allusion to a fact so important in the family history.

The substitution of *bosheth* for *baal* in the word *Ishbosheth* may be accounted for by the ambiguity of the name *Ish-baal*, which might to most minds convey the sense “man of Baal,” when we consider the notice taken of the meaning of proper names, and the importance attached to them, as well as the prevalent sensitiveness or jealousy in regard to the use of the name of an idol god. An instance of this feeling, as encouraged under Divine teaching, is given in the prophecy of *Hosea*, in which God, representing Israel as His spouse, says, “It shall be at the day . . . that thou shalt call me *Ishi* [my husband]; and shalt call me no more *Baali* [my Lord].” And the reason is thus given: “For I will take away the names of *Baalim* out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name.” Here it is evident that the use of the word *baal*, in its ordinary sense, as applied to a husband, is proscribed because it was the name of an idol; for there is no proof whatever that *Jehovah*, who is here the speaker, was ever worshipped by the name of *Baal*, as He appears to have

been under the name and figure of the golden calves of Jero-boam. It is worthy of notice, that in this passage, both the words which form the name of Ish-baal are introduced, and in such manner as to show that the name, having originally the meaning which we have supposed, might yet pass into the form Ish-bosheth, in consequence of the idolatrous use of the word *baal*. Poole, in his Synopsis, gives the following summary of the comments of various expositors on this passage:—"The name Baal is prohibited to show detestation of idols, because the word is ambiguous and common to idols. Although the word *baal* in ordinary use means a husband, Israel shall not be allowed to employ it (in speaking of or to God), through horror of the name, which was applied to an idol; lest, while the people are speaking of one thing, they should remember another, and, uttering the name Baal, should think of the idol." Simonis explains the name Esh-baal to mean "fire of Baal," since the word *esh* may signify fire, and intimates that the sense is equivalent to that of Mephibosheth, "consumer or destroyer of Baal." He considers the change from Esh in Esh-baal to Ish in Ishbosheth to be a play upon words, by which the people of the time expressed their sense of the character of this incapable and unhappy prince, thus calling him "man of shame." Parallel instances are to be found among the surnames of the Greek kings of Egypt, several of whom were known during their lifetime, and are always mentioned in history, by names which were actually nicknames, and substituted for those which were given at their birth, or which they had themselves assumed. The supposition of Simonis is entirely in accordance with the Hebrew or Oriental usage in regard to proper names, and is, in fact, the same in principle with that which has been offered above, and which accounts for the change from Ish-baal to Ishbosheth by the popular sense in which the second word of the original name was understood. But most etymologists would agree that it is far more probable that *esh* should be an abbreviation or corruption of *ish*, than that *ish* should become a substitute for *esh* in this name.

(To be continued.)

The Preacher's Emblematory Hells.

ANCIENT MYTHS: THEIR MORAL MEANINGS.

Books of Reference: Max Müller's "Lectures on Comparative Mythology." Hardy's "Manual of Buddhism." Pritchard's "Analysis of Egyptian Mythology." Coxe's "Mythology of the Aryan Nations." Coxe's "Tales of Ancient Greece." Gladstone's "Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age." Farrar's "Critical History of Free Thought." Keary's "Heroes of Asgard." Canon Kingsley's "Sermons." Ruskin's "Queen of the Air." Sir T. Malory's "Morte d'Arthur." "Bacon's Essays." "Murray's Manual of Mythology."

"Shall we sneer and laugh at all these dreams as mere follies of the heathen? If we do so, we shall not show the spirit of God or the mind of Christ, nor shall we show our knowledge of the Bible."—*Canon Kingsley.*

No. X.

Dionysos; or, Man's Animal Appetites.

THIS god, who was also known by Greeks and Romans as Bacchus, was the son of a Theban woman, Semele, and of the great deity, Zeus. Prematurely as well as dishonorably born, he was in peril of being devoured in the lightning flames in which his corrupt mother perished; but was saved by Zeus. He is nursed by Persephone till manhood, the years of youth being spent in innocence and bliss among the nymphs, herdsmen, and vine-tenders. During that time, however, his face and form were so effeminate that his sex seemed doubtful, and for some while he was trained as a girl. There was a tradition, that,—whether in his infancy or late in youth is doubtful,—he died, was buried, and afterwards revived. In his youth he appears to have been not only distinguished as a vine-dresser in Greece, but, in his travels to India, as the discoverer of wine and the father of its use. At first he is praised as benefactor of mankind, and

as patron of the arts of peace. So the Muses, with their high-toned gladness and festivities, gathered round him and followed in his train. But, giving way to fierce and stubborn moods, he chooses as his equipage a chariot drawn by blood-thirsty tigers. Indeed, he himself assumes the form of a wild lion in his war with the Giants. Because of his frequent lack of self-restraint in his various passions, he comes to be regarded as "the drunken god," and therefore the sober king Lycurgus will not tolerate him in his kingdom. Very naturally, instead of now having the Muses for his attendants, there follow him in his restless wanderings a wild uproarious crowd of deformed demons, satyrs, and nymphs. The wild processions rush with torches and thyrsos rods in their hands, singing and shouting and shrieking amid the discordant clash of cymbals, and wild confusion of flutes. They are represented in works of art as raging with madness or enthusiasm in vehement motions; while, with no power of controlling them, Dionysos leans easily, like a

man who is slightly intoxicated. Thus, instead of peaceful cultivation of vineyards, there arise festivals that are a sort of worship of Dionysos, and that, in their wild, frantic, cruel, and obscene revels, are known as Bacchic orgies. He, having introduced the use of wine among women, gloats, first in the groves and mountains of Greece, and afterwards in Italy, in the riotous homage of immense mobs that, intoxicated with fiery wine, and in which, while men and girls figure wildly, the principal actors were "Bacchæ," women whose licentiousness was so outrageous that ultimately the Roman Senate had strictly to prohibit the "Bacchanalia," as the festivals were called. Not, however, before the frantic "Bacchæ" had torn to pieces Pantheus and Orpheus. The ivy, that grows even on death, and is itself evergreen, was sacred to him; and his sacrifices were lecherous rams and filthy swine; while tiger, lynx, panther, and ass are devoted to him.

The myth seems naturally and easily, if not indeed designedly, to illustrate Man's Animal Appetites.

I. THEY ARE COMPLEX IN THEIR ELEMENTS. Just as Dionysos was related to a god and a woman, so our human nature connects us with what is most sacred, and yet may link us to the lower animals. And just as he was fitted for the healthy toil of the vineyard, but perverted himself to be the mere central figure in riotous orgies; so our appetites may either develop our manhood into the artisan, the artist, the sage, or

the voluptuary, the profligate, and the harlot. All our passions, Divinely given, may be used for noble ends; but when once the true balance between the moral and the material is destroyed and there is effeminacy (as with Bacchus) instead of manliness, and self-indulgence instead of self-restraint, the Creator's purpose is frustrated and His handiwork prostituted.

II. THEY ARE DIFFICULT IN THEIR DISCIPLINE. The ceaseless restlessness of this god from his youth onwards is an exact image of the restlessness of unlawful desires; while his death and reviving illustrate the temporary lull and renewed outbreak of untamed passions. His cunning and subtility, his endless expeditions and ungovernable frenzies, find their counterpart in every man of unbridled lust; while the ivy that was sacred to him is an apt, though too beautiful, emblem of inordinate appetite. In the ivy's evergreenness is the perpetuity of appetite; in its creeping and winding about trees and walls and buildings is a hint of the wanton inventiveness with which appetite makes all things serve its guilty purposes. As Lord Bacon says, "The predominant passion of the mind throws itself like the ivy round all human actions, entwines all our resolutions, and perpetually adheres to, and mixes itself among, or even overtops, them."

III. THEY ARE TERRIBLE IN THEIR EXCESSES. From the childhood of beauty this god ripened or rotted into a maturity of lust. Tigers drew his

chariot; for passions become fierce and cruel even to the depth of Turkish atrocities. And instead of the Muses (which, alas, are still often the handmaids of evil), he is soon followed by wild and crazy demons; for indulged appetite scares away the pure and good, and is surrounded by the mean and the cruel. Its antics are as absurd as they are corrupt, for is not the man under their fascination ridiculous and contemptible? And does not unhin-

dered lust repeat the murder of such as Pantheus and Orpheus? Bacchanalian orgies are material representations, not overdrawn nor too highly coloured, of the havoc to the man himself and to others that the Animal Appetites can work where there is not the self-restraint and self-government and Divine balancings of human nature which are the glory of Christian manliness.

URIAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

Conscience the Soul's Eye.

THIS eye is something different from that faculty which discovers causes, adaptations, and logical properties—the *intellect*; and something different, too, from the faculty which discovers beauty in the exquisite forms of life and the imitative forms of art—the *imagination*; it is that which sees *moral* truth, perfection, order, God; it is CONSCIENCE. Without this faculty, there could be no more an idea of God and duty than there could be of the forms and hues of this material universe without the eye of the body. Nor can there be a true and happy idea, unless the organ in both cases be in a *healthy* state. Goethe says, "Had thine eye not been sunny, how could it ever have looked upon the sun?" The bodily eye may become so diseased as only to mislead, confound, and give pain. It may make creation hazy, grotesque, or hideous. Ay, and its tender nerves may convey agony to the brain with every

ray of light. It may so happen with the soul's moral "eye." Nay, it is so in the case of the vast majorities of all lands. *Morally* they see nothing clearly, they grope in darkness. On nearly every *ethical* question they are lost in the mists of speculation, worldliness, and doubt; and scarcely a solitary star gleams from the moral firmament: volumes of dense and ever-blackening clouds roll between the human spirit and its God. No catastrophe can befall a soul so terrible as this disease of the optical organ. "*If thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness!*" Let the bodily eye be incapacitated for its function, and all stars and suns shall shine in vain. A faint symbol this of spiritual blindness. "*If the light that is in thee,*" mark, IN THEE, "*be darkness, how great is that darkness!*" Nothing can give vision if there be no eye. Sweep every luminary from the heavens, still, perhaps, we may kindle artificial lights and see, if the eye remain unimpaired.

But if the eye be gone, there is no substitute; under a blazing firmament we are enfolded in thickest midnight.

Holy Thoughts.

WHO shall tell the value of one true thought? It is a quenchless ray from the infinite sun, an ever-multiplying breadseed for the millions, a fountain of vital influences which no time shall exhaust. Such thoughts mould and fashion the world, even into the moral image of its God. Man's strength lies in the trueness of his thoughts; the truest thinker is the prince and benefactor of men.

Fruit of a Man's Soul.

WHAT is the fruit of a man's soul? Fruit is the natural production of a tree; it embodies and expresses its essence. Hence *all* the acts of men cannot be regarded as the *fruits* of the inner life. Sometimes human actions have no vital connection with the inner governing principles of the heart. Men sometimes act against their will; sometimes without their will, they are sometimes creatures of necessity, and sometimes the dupes of mistake. The actions, therefore, which can only be regarded as the criteria must be those which are *fruit*—the natural production, exponent, and embodiment of the moral principle. The *fruitful* actions of a man are the average and spontaneous doings of his life. We would not judge a tree by its occasional productions; it may

fail one year, and yet be a good tree. So with man's character. You must strike the average of his deeds. You must deal with it as the philosopher deals with nature, the theologian with the Bible, the judge with the evidence—look upon the whole. The average conduct, then, and not the occasional deed, is the fruit by which you are to test the inner principle of a man's heart. This is the tongue of his soul.

Trying to Pray.

SOMETIMES I feel He's near,
But oft too far away;
Oppressed by doubt and fear,
I try but cannot pray.

Distressed and tried, I'm trying,
Although I cannot pray;
Benighted—a child crying
Because he's lost the way.

But He is ever nigh me,
And hears me when I call;
He hides His face to try me,
He'll never let me fall.

Thou "Light of men!" oh,
teach me!

Do Thou teach me to pray;
Should light Divine but reach
me,
My night would turn to day

Thou'rt all I can desire—
The Truth, the Life, the
Way;

If Thou wilt me inspire
With faith, then I shall pray.

"I never will forsake thee!"
Thou wilt, canst, not deceive.
Upon Thy word I take Thee;
Lord, help me to believe!

E. T. D.

Meirion, Abergele, Aug. 22, 1876.

SCIENTIFIC FACTS AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

"Books of Illustration" designed to help preachers, are somewhat, we think, too abounding. They are often made up to a great extent of anecdotes from the sentimental side of life, and not always having a healthful influence or historic foundation. We find that preachers and hearers are getting tired of such. Albeit illustrations are needed by every speaker who would interest the people, and are sanctioned by the highest authority. Nature itself is a parable. Hence we have arranged with a naturalist who has been engaged in scientific investigation for many years, to supply the *Homilist* with such reliable and well-ascertained facts in nature as cultured and conscientious men may use with confidence, as mirrors of morals and diagrams of doctrines.

The Transmission of Hereditary Peculiarities.

TENDENCIES to particular vices are inherited and are exhibited in cases where the early death of parents or the removal of the children in infancy prevents the idea of any imitation or effect of education being the cause. That the organization of the thief is transmitted from father to son through generations, seems tolerably certain. Gall has cited some striking examples. And murder, like talent, seems occasionally to run in families. Parents with an unconquerable aversion to animal food have transmitted that aversion; and parents with the horrible propensity for human flesh have transmitted the propensity to children brought up away from them under all social restraints.

The *Desmodium Gyrens*: The Restless Temperament.

THE lateral or very small folioles of the *Desmodium gyrens* plant are almost always in motion, executing little jerks somewhat analogous to the movements of the seconds of a watch. One of the folioles rises and the other descends at the same time, and with a corresponding

force. When the first begins to descend, the other begins to rise. The large, or terminal, folioles move also, inclining themselves now to the right now to the left, but by a continuous and very slow movement as compared with that of the lateral folioles. This singular mechanism endures throughout the life of the plant. It jerks itself day and night through drought and humidity. The warmer and more humid is the day, the more lively are its movements; they occur spontaneously, and without any apparent cause. In India the plant has been known to make sixty jerks in the minute.

There are individuals like this Bengal plant, who are in a state of unceasing restlessness. The individual is best known by the name of fidget. He or she (for a woman is quite as often a fidget as a man is) exists in a perpetual fuss; and the work of life is a meaningless series of uninterrupted movements, whose end and object no human being can see. The activity is not strong and progressive, but consists in nervous fuss for the sake of fuss. The fidget never accomplishes anything as the result of all this restless motion. Yet this does not deter the creature from working out its fussy destiny.

Alteration of the habit is utterly impossible. The fidget is a fidget by nature, as the *Desmodium gyrans* is a jerker by nature. The number of worries the human fidget can perform in a given time has never yet been actually computed, the patience of man being quite unequal to the task of accurate computation. But general experience puts the approximate number very high indeed, particularly in the case of the female fidget, who, when settled even in the most comfortable circumstances, has been known in one single day to display the fussy fidgets to such an extent that the beholder, in utter dizziness and bewilderment, has been compelled to leave the spot. Happy is the man who is able to do so, without ever having to return to it.

The Varieties in Trees becoming Indistinguishable in Age: The Neutralization of Party Idiosyncrasies.

SEVERAL varieties of the hawthorn, as well as of the lime and juniper, are very distinct in their foliage and habit when young, but in the course of thirty or forty years become extremely like each other; thus reminding us of the well-known fact that the deodar, the cedar of Lebanon, and that of the Atlas are distinguished with the greatest ease whilst young, but with difficulty when old.

In the early life of political parties, their colours and peculiarities are most conspicuous. In the early life of religious

sects, their particular and denoting specialities are sharp and clear. As time advances, the colours begin to blend with other colours, the peculiarities shrivel as the principles expand, the specialities are softened down into less harsh outlines. The vital power in both cases becomes stronger and stronger with time, though its accidents, badges, and accompaniments are less and less observable.

The Mirage: The Illusions of Life.

THE mirage, for the most part, occurs in extensive plains, when the weather is calm and heated by the sun. The plains of Asia and Africa have become celebrated in this respect. Thus, during the expedition to Egypt, the French army frequently experienced cruel deceptions. The ground of Egypt forms a plain perfectly horizontal, the villages are situated on small eminences. In the morning and evening they appear in their proper places and at their real distances; but when the ground is highly heated, the country resembles a lake, and the villages appear to be built on islands and reflected in the water. As we approach, the lake disappears, and the traveller, devoured by thirst, is deceived by his hope.

The ardent imagination of youth, and the eager desire of hopeful men, often produce to the eye of faith glorious and glowing visions of a bright future, which, alas! is like a mirage.

Homiletical Breviaries.

No. CCLIV.

Three Greatest Things.

"AND WE KNOW THAT THE SON OF GOD IS COME, AND HATH GIVEN US AN UNDERSTANDING, THAT WE MAY KNOW HIM THAT IS TRUE, AND WE ARE IN HIM THAT IS TRUE, EVEN IN HIS SON JESUS CHRIST. THIS IS THE TRUE GOD, AND ETERNAL LIFE."—1 John v. 20.

IN this verse we have three of the greatest things. I. The greatest FACT IN HUMAN HISTORY. What is the greatest fact? That the Son of God is come, or *ἦκε*, has come. There are many great facts in the history of our race,—facts that are epochs, facts in which past ages seem to meet and from which future histories take their date. But of all the facts the advent of Christ to our world eighteen centuries ago is the greatest. To it all the past pointed, from it all the future will derive its impulse and take its date. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus CAME into the world." This fact is the most (1) *Undeniable*, (2) *Influential*, and (3) *Vital to the interests of every man*. We have here: II. The greatest CAPABILITY OF THE HUMAN MIND. What is that? "An understanding, that we may know Him that is true." Men are endowed with many distinguishing faculties: imagination, memory, intellect. But the capacity to know Him Who is true, is for many reasons greater than all. First: It is a *rare* faculty. The mighty millions have not this power "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee." Secondly: It is a *Christ-imparted* faculty—"He hath given us." What is it? It is LOVE. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God." Christ generates this love. Love is the *facultas cognoscendi*. Love alone can interpret love, "God is love." We have here: III. The greatest PRIVILEGE IN HUMAN LIFE. "We are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ." This means, Jesus Christ is the true God. In Him, as the branches are in the vine, as the members are in the head, or as the soul is in supreme love. Without figure, the permanent residence of the soul is the object of its supreme love: that object is the root of its life, the spring of its activities.

CONCLUSION: This greatest fact in history should be profoundly studied, this greatest faculty of the soul should be sought for and cultivated, this greatest privilege should be struggled after as the *summum bonum* of humanity.

No. CCLV.

Moral Courage.

"WE HAVE NO MIGHT AGAINST THIS GREAT COMPANY THAT COMETH AGAINST US; NEITHER KNOW WE WHAT TO DO: BUT OUR EYES ARE UPON THEE."—2 Chron. xx. 12.

THESE words are part of the prayer which Jehoshaphat made when the children of Ammon and Moab, and others, threatened the ruin of his country and the destruction of Jerusalem. Their overwhelming numbers seemed to drive him almost to despair, and he exclaimed "We have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do." The subject suggested by the passage is, *moral courage*. I. THERE ARE OFTEN TERRIBLE CRISES IN MEN'S LIVES, WHEN MORAL COURAGE IS REQUIRED. It was so now with Jehoshaphat. We learn from Psalm lxxxiii. that the Assyrians, who must have come through Syria, had joined the confederacy. It had been joined, too, by Philistines and Tyrians who came from the west (Ps. lxxxiii. 8). We see also from the same Psalm (verses 5, 11, and 13), that their object was utterly to destroy Israel and to take possession of Palestine. Most men are brought at times to a crisis when they are ready to exclaim, "We know not what to do." First: Sometimes in the course of *secular* work men feel this. A "great company" of worldly anxieties stands before them, and they exclaim, We know not *what* to do. Secondly: Sometimes in the course of *personal moral culture* men feel this. Men see their old habits, lusts, propensities, appearing before them, and they exclaim, "O wretched man that I am!" Thirdly: Sometimes in the process of *philanthropic labour* men feel this. How often earnest souls, in their endeavours to put down wrong and to spread the Gospel of light and peace, meet with a "great company" of opponents, and they exclaim, "neither know we *what* to do." In truth, a great company of foes meets us in every step of duty and benevolence. Elijah met them, and retired, disheartened, to a cave. Jeremiah met them, and said, "I will speak no more in Thy name." The subject suggests: II. THE ONLY SOURCE OF TRUE MORAL COURAGE IS TRUST IN GOD. "Our eyes are upon Thee." Trust is the spirit of courage and it is the strength of spirit to depend upon the object upon which the trust is set. Real trust in God cannot fail to make men invincible and sublimely heroic in the most perilous and distressing cases of life. To trust Him, is to trust LOVE, whose sympathies are deep, tender, and unchangeable. To trust

Him, is to trust WISDOM, equal to every conceivable emergency, ever able to direct in the greatest perplexity. To trust Him, is to trust POWER—power that can make the weakest mighty and quench a thousand hells by a volition. "Are you in the thickest battle and know not what to do?" He is the Lord of Hosts. Are you in a fierce tempest, or on a treacherous and stormy sea? He is a Pilot with the winds and waves at His command. Are you in affliction? He is the Physician, who has the power to heal all diseases. Our eyes are upon Thee, there let them rest and centre. Who shall make us afraid? We sing "the Lord is our refuge and strength."

No. CCLVI.

Harvest Lessons (for the Young).

"LET THINE EYES BE ON THE FIELD THAT THEY DO REAP."—*Ruth* ii. 9.

ARE there no reasons why your attention should be devoted to the harvest field as well as Ruth's—no indications for your life, with its duty and destiny? We think there are. For there is illustrated: I. THE MANIFESTATION OF WHAT IS HIDDEN IN HUMAN LIFE. In the early spring the buried seed-corn was completely hidden. You could get no answer to such questions as, What sort? How much? Is it germinating or rotting? The reply would be, Wait. Harvest will reveal. So in human character. Thoughts, and wishes, and life-bias are often concealed. The good, through failure, seems bad; the bad, through hypocrisy, good. There shall be an unveiling. Contact with Christ brings out, in conversion and in judgment, many surprises in human character. Read in the golden letters of the harvest field, "There is nothing hid that shall not be known." II. THE INCREASE OF WHAT IS SMALL IN HUMAN LIFE. What contrast between the seeds and the sheaf. What growth, "some sixty-fold, some an hundred-fold." So with the greatest thing in human history, Christianity. The babe, becoming the sovereign of the race. So with good and evil in human lives. The thought growing to wish, wish to resolve, resolve to deed, deed to habit, habit to influence that is immeasurable. Listen in rustling corn of the harvest field, to the question, "Who hath despised the day of small things?" III. THE RETRIBUTION FOR WHAT IS DONE IN HUMAN LIFE. In the destiny of tares and wheat, Christ teaches souls to read their retribution. It is the outcome of the life. Hell and heaven are the perfect

outgrowth, the harvest of character. The good shall ripen to glory, the evil to shame. Hear, in the music of the sickle of the harvest field, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap: he that soweth to the flesh," etc. IV. THE PASSING AWAY OF OPPORTUNITY IN HUMAN LIFE. Each season gives its own chances. You cannot reverse the wheel of the year, nor of human life. Hence the wail, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Trace in the stubble of the harvest field, "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor labour, nor toil in the grave whither thou goest." V. THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD OVER THE WHOLE OF HUMAN LIFE. His hand protects, His influence nurtures, the seed-corn. So that through cold and heat, night and day, storm and sunshine, it ripens to harvest. Not only protected through all, but using all. And in His faithfulness in giving us annual harvests, and so meeting wants that "railways and roads, and banks, and fields, and insurances" could never supply, He shows the human family how directly dependent it is on the providence of the Eternal Father. So He cares for human life, and through frosts and summer heats, storms and midnights, matures the Christly soul. "In the song of Harvest Home hear the promise, "All things work together for good."

URIAH R. THOMAS.

Redland.

No. CCLVII.

Collection in Church.

"NOW CONCERNING THE COLLECTION."—1 Cor. xvi. 1.

THIS is in close connection with the sublime argument about the Resurrection. There is no gulf between doctrine and duty; rather, most intimate union between the hope of heaven and details of common life on earth. Duty is the fruit of rightly believed doctrine; character is the index and result of creed. Here we are reminded: I. THE GIFT OF PROPERTY IS GOD'S SPECIAL SERVICE, IS THE IMPULSE OF ALL GODLY MEN. It may be in His service in commerce and art; but in religion and philanthropy it is specially devoted to Him. Love must give. Lovers of God give to Him. Jacob at Bethel; David asking, "What shall I render?" etc. Mary bringing the alabaster box. II. THE GIFT OF PROPERTY TO GOD IS ENJOINED AS AN OBLIGATION IN SCRIPTURE. There are, (1) *Literal commands*, (a) To the Hebrews: tithes, etc.

(3) To the Christians, as in this chapter; (2) *Promises of consequent blessings*: "Prove me now herewith," etc., "It is more blessed to give than to receive." III. THE GIFT OF PROPERTY TO GOD SHOULD BE SYSTEMATIC. It is, (1) *Universal*, "Every one of you;" (2) *Thoughtful*. It is to be by a laying by, which means frequent thought, and on the first day of the week, when associations may well make the thought sacred. (3) *Proportionately*. "As God hath prospered." (4) *Thoroughly unselfish*. Here was a Gentile subscription for the needs of Jews—Corinth caring for Jerusalem.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

My Ministry at Stockwell.

(Continued from page 238.)

DURING some days of severe illness I had given up the intent of prosecuting in this number the history of My Ministry at Stockwell; but as the waves of health begin to rise and roll, stranded purposes move again.

During the first years of my ministry at Stockwell I was fired with what is called the "*Missionary Spirit*." I raised in the Church under my care sums ranging from £100 to £200—amounts which, in those days, were considered remarkably large. I accepted a seat on the London Missionary Board, and there periodically met with good men, many of whom are gone. Arthur Tidman and Joseph Freeman, the Secretaries, and the warm-hearted James Sherman of Surrey Chapel, won my confidence, and I gained their loving friendship. They were very different men. The first was keen as a razor, diplomatic as a Jesuit, most able in debate, and capable at all times of championing well any cause dear to his heart: his generalship was equal to any occasion. The second, a brusque and bulky man, with a florid countenance, eyes strikingly small, and almost lost in a forest of eyebrows, was a man of a somewhat different type. He had not that adroitness of intellect, that business genius, which distinguished his co-Secretary (for they were both the paid managers of the Institution). Still, he was not "a miserable mediocrity" in any sense. Quick to see and prompt to execute, his whole nature seemed to pulsate with sympathy. The last, James Sherman, was always aglow and gushing. Dear man! he did not care to scrutinize at any meetings statements of the doings of the Secretaries.

He was too good to suspect; hence he accepted all as gospel. He saw "the finger of Providence" where I thought I saw the finger of something else. He was a loving, and consequently a lovable, man. He had been the colleague, and was at this time the pulpit successor, of the renowned Rowland Hill.

I went for the Society, as often as my home engagements would allow, on deputation work. My theology, at that time, was that coarse conventional thing called "Missionary Theology;" hence I was fitted, to some extent, to do the sensational. I drew horrid pictures of heathendom, shut out (as I then believed, and as thousands of fools now believe) from all Divine revelations, and destitute of all virtues. I caused them to march in teeming millions before the excited imaginations of my audiences, on the dark, rugged road, muddy with blood and crime, towards the precipice of hell, over which so many thousands went tumbling down in eternal burning every hour. I was considered a very successful deputationist; and the work to me at that time, as it is now to many of my dear brethren, was very delightful. Such work often leads one into fresh scenes, rural and civic, without any draw upon your own purse; into fresh society, where you are entertained at the most hospitable houses and even lionized by the local adherents of the Society. All this zeal, however, in my case has long been extinct, although my love for Christ and aspirations for the real progress of the race in all that is true and beautiful and good, never glowed with greater intensity than it does to-day. The fact is, the zeal kindled by a traditional faith must go out when such faith departs; and such faith must depart sooner or later in the history of a mind which, constitutionally, is ever active in trying to reach the roots of things.

Through the loss of this zeal I have often been represented by what are called the friends of the Society, as one to marvel at or suspect, and whose ministry is of questionable utility. Indeed, a minister loses much who has not a hearty sympathy with the Missionary Institution connected with his Communion. It has almost become a rule, to conclude that a minister whose Church does not make a handsome figure in the Reports, cannot be of much note or worth. Should he work his Church up to £400 or £500 a year, which a large number of ministers might easily do, he will become the great man of the denomination; his name will be quoted by all the deputationists at their meetings, will be emblazoned in the so-called religious journals; he will be invited to every missionary platform, pressed to preach the "great missionary sermon;" he

will be "*one of our leading men.*" Yet what a worthless test of ministerial usefulness! There happen to get into most congregations,—and they are increasing in number,—men who have amassed large fortunes and who scarcely know what to do with their money; and it soothes their consciences and gratifies their vanity to put down on the collecting plate a cheque for £100, £200, or £300.

I have said that the kind of zeal which once inspired me to what is called missionary work is now extinct. I may be asked what is the cause. I have already answered: The traditional faith is gone. I have often heard men say they have lost faith in it because of the enormous sums of money that are expended on the work. This is not my objection. I think that the £100,000 a year, or whatever it is, expended by the London Missionary Society, is a very trifling amount compared to the sum spent in intemperance, empty entertainments, and, indeed, in even local schemes that are detrimental to the morals of mankind. This amount, at any rate, goes to support, for the most part, educated and in many ways worthy men; it goes to enable young men whose love of romance and adventure is strong in them, to visit distant countries and to live as gentlemen in communities of different tongues, races, and religions; it enables ministers to have very pleasant holidays without money and without price.

As I am on this subject,—and it is an important one, full of general interest, and one in connection with which I should like to appear to my contemporaries and posterity in a right light,—I feel I must go more fully into it.

At a meeting held in Carlisle, in aid of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, on the 19th of August, 1872, the Archbishop of Canterbury is reported in *The Times* to have spoken as follows: "There were many reasons why we should not relax our efforts in our missionary exertions. One of these arose from the peculiar circumstances in which the world found itself in the present day. It was no longer necessary to send men to distant lands in order that they might see specimens of the heathen. Take," said his Grace, "a return ticket to London in the middle of the season. Go either to Her Majesty's Levee, or the Lord Mayor's banquet, or walk even through the streets, and what do you see? A cavalcade of six carriages, bearing the Burmese ambassadors, absolutely heathen, who had come to do their homage to the greatness of England in the centre of England. Go to the Temple, where the familiar sight of our barristers with their peculiar costume used formerly to be the only

thing we saw, and we find some sixty Hindoos members of the Temple in Lincoln's Inn, still remaining Hindoos and heathens in the centre of civilization. Go again to the east end of London, to what is called the Oriental Home, where every specimen of the heathen of the East is gathered together in consequence of our merchandise with the East; or follow Mr. Dickens into the Chinaman's shop, and see men there smoking opium as if they were in the centre of China; or go elsewhere and meet a whole troop of Japanese, and you will see that a man no more requires to go to the extremities of the earth to be convinced of the claims which the heathen have upon us; that in our metropolis we are brought so near heathenism of the worst class, that unless we take some steps for converting the heathen, the heathen will be converting us. For this is not merely an imaginative idea. I am almost afraid to say it; but I cannot help thinking that this great proximity of the East to ourselves has, somehow or other, affected the philosophy on which the young men feed in our great seminaries of learning: that men of learning have more toleration for that denial than they had in the olden times; that systems which have existed for centuries in the extreme lands of heathenism are finding some sort of echo even among the literature and philosophy of this Christian country. Therefore we are bound now, far more than ever we were before, to exert ourselves in this great work, which this and the sister Society have undertaken many years."

Two replies to the speech of the Primate appeared in *The Times* a few days after, from two heathens living in London, evidently men of culture and great mental vigour. One characterized the words of the Archbishop as "containing opinions remarkable alike for their inaccuracy and want of Christian charity," and observed that it would be "just as unlikely a thing for the heathens in London to embrace the belief which the Archbishop inculcated, as it would be for Stuart Mill or Professor Tyndall to believe in the commonly accepted views of Christendom." The other letter was still more cogent, caustic, and severe. Canon Trevor and the Bishop of Carlisle, in whose city the Archbishop made this remarkable speech, came out loyally in defence of their ecclesiastical chief. The perusal of all this discussion could scarcely fail to convince men that missionary institutions, with their present theology, and as at present conducted, will never make men Christly. Who has a better knowledge, or ought to have, of the state of religion in this country, than the man whom the English Government has set over all England? He occupies

that elevated post of observation which brings within his sweep all our populations in their moral and religious beliefs and practices. And what does he say? "Unless we take steps to convert the heathen, the heathen will convert us." "A more melancholy confession," said the leading journal at the time, "of Christian feebleness could hardly be made. During the last few centuries we have sent to India thousands of our best and ablest men; we have subscribed vast sums of money for the support of our missionaries; and other Churches have been at least as active as our own in the attempt to convert the people of India to Christianity. Yet at the end of that time, and after all these efforts, we have reason (according to the Archbishop of Canterbury) to fear lest, instead of our army of missionaries converting the Hindoos, a handful of heathen shall take our Universities."

Now, the whole discussion on this subject suggested to me the following thoughts: 1. That there is no better scene for the conversion of the heathen to Christianity than London itself. That London abounds with heathens, not only English heathens, but heathens from India, Egypt, Japan, China, America, Persia, and the numerous islands of Oceanica, is an undoubted fact. The world representatively is in London. The Archbishop complains of this; but if he believes (as he professes to do) in Christianity as the means to regenerate and improve the race, he ought to thank God that they are here. Where can he better do the work of conversion? Our missionaries in foreign lands have a large number of conflicting elements to contend with, which they have not here. They have to battle with the difficulties of so far falling in with the manners and customs of the foreigner as to facilitate the access of their doctrines to the heart; they have often a climate to endure, prejudicial alike to their physical health and mental vigour; they have also to struggle against the whole current of the tribal thought and feeling, both social and religious; and they have, moreover, to address themselves, not in their own vernacular tongue, but in the language of the foreigner—a language which they have attained with difficulty and in which they are seldom, if ever, able to speak either with pleasantness or effect to their audience. Now, the missionary to the heathen living in London has none of these difficulties. He need not conform to their habits or customs, they must bow to his; he has not the full tide of their tribal or national sentiments to contend with, they have to stand against his; he has not to address them in their language, they have to learn his, and hear him in his own. But not only have the

missionaries we send out to foreign parts to convert the heathen, a large number of antagonistic elements to contend with that they have not here, but they have in London numerous and powerful aids which they lack in foreign parts. They have here the support of national opinion and public law; they have here a thousand churches at their back, and hosts of Christian friends to stimulate and cheer them on; they have numerous invaluable institutions as the fruits of that religion which they recommend. These and many other helps the apostle of Christianity has in London of which in foreign lands he is utterly deprived. Why then should we lament the existence of these foreign heathen in London? Why send out your missionaries to form a connection with them in distant lands, and deplore their presence when they come amongst you? Why try to convert them when 10,000 miles away, and neglect the effort here, in your streets, at your door, with far more chance of success?

The other thought which this discussion suggested to me was, 2. That conventional Christianity is not likely to convert the heathen, either in London or elsewhere. "Unless," says the archbishop, "we take some steps for converting the heathen, the heathen will be converting us." Thus speaks one who knows all about English Christianity, and who must be supposed to be incapable of any exaggeration. Let us look at conventional Christianity as represented in the Episcopal Church of which he is the head; and I, though a Nonconformist, am free to confess that it appears in an aspect there as fair as in most of the free Churches, and far better than in some. Let us suppose, then, an intelligent Hindoo or Mohammedan studying it as seen in the Established Church of this country; what does he discover? First, perhaps, he will be struck with the division prevailing amongst those who are the professed disciples of Him who prayed that all His followers might be made one. He finds them riven into three great parties, the high, the low, and the broad. Whilst between none of these there is much sympathy, between some there is strong antagonism and bitter controversy; and one or other of them is seen occasionally invoking the strong arm of the law to crush the offending party. He reads their party organs, the so-called religious newspapers, and finds that they abound with acrimonious controversies, records of inane sermons, silly ceremonies, religious scandals, and ecclesiastical law-suits. The advertising columns he finds crowded with the announcements of sales of church livings—transactions in which hundreds and thousands of souls are handed over to the care of

any one in "holy orders" who can invest a stipulated sum. He finds, also, at times, in these religious journals some of the most enlightened men of the community—men whose sentiments commend themselves to the reason and conscience of all thinking people,—such as Arnold of Rugby or F. W. Robertson of Brighton,—branded as heretics, and held up to public obloquy and execration. As he proceeds in his inquiries he discovers that the most useful men in that Church are the worst paid, that numbers of them are half starved, while a few of the leading ecclesiastics live in palaces and roll in chariots of opulence. He attends the services; and creeds are read, professing to explain the inexplicable, and thundering damnation on all who do not believe the jargon; he hears discourses which neither satisfy the intellect nor the deep moral yearnings of the heart, and sometimes, through their intolerant spirit and derogatory ideas of the Infinite, produce a painful revulsion of soul. He hears a whole congregation chanting out the horrid imprecations of David on his enemies, sometimes declaring that their "bones are broken," that they are like "pelicans in the wilderness," and "sparrows on the housetop." The farther he proceeds in his investigations, the more distressingly impressed does he become with the outrageous inconsistency of the whole with the character, the spirit, and the teaching of Him whom they profess to follow—Him who, when He was reviled, reviled not again, and who taught that God is a Spirit, and they that "worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

If he turns from the Episcopal Church to the Nonconformist sects he is not likely to find manifestations of the Gospel much more grateful to the reason or winning to the heart; but, on the contrary, in some directions he will discover such mawkish sentiments, vulgar blasphemies, ignorant interpretations, pietistic absurdities, and intolerant exclusiveness as will strike him, if he be a thoughtful man, with loathing and disgust.

Now, I say, is Christianity in these conventional forms at all likely to convert the heathen, either in London or in their own countries? What is there in such developments of it but the world, the flesh, and the devil? And these they have in their own systems and in their own hearts. Is there anything in these forms to inspire their admiration, command their homage, or win their devotion? Nothing. Truly the Archbishop spoke advisedly and with candour when he said, "Unless we take some steps for converting the heathen, the heathen will be converting us." Yes; "some steps" must be taken, but what steps? That is the question.

Another thought which this discussion suggested to me was, 3. That, could conventional Christianity convert the heathen, the conversion would be of little if any spiritual service. I grant that we can make even the best of the heathen a little better in some respects. We might make them better theologically. The God represented even by the hyper-Calvinist or the mawkish Plymouth Brother, though very untruthful and revolting, may perhaps be better than some of the deities of the heathen. Better *socially*. Although many of the ethical principles of *Manu* are unexceptionable, yet they seem insufficient rightly to regulate either man's social sympathies or his conduct in his intercourse with his fellow-man; whilst they signally fail to promote comforts of home, and to provide asylums for the indigent and the suffering. Better *politically*. The political laws dictated and regulated by conventional Christianity, afford greater protection to the lives, the rights, and the property of their subjects than those of any other country. But what really spiritual good will it secure? What new heavenly sympathies will it kindle in the soul? What nobler aspirations after truth and God? What greater consecration to everlasting rectitude? What closer fellowship with the Eternal and the Divine? What greater spirituality and self-obliviousness will it engender? In other words, will conversion to conventional Christianity give man the spirit of Christ? Unless it gives him this, it does no real and lasting service. "For if any man has not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

Is *war* the curse of the heathen world? Conventional Christianity sanctions war. It consecrates the banners, chants the triumphs, and emblazons the memory of the most victorious in the bloody work. Is *caste* one of the curses of India? Scarcely anywhere is caste more rampant than here in England amongst the nominal professors of Christianity. Is *avarice* one of the damning passions of heathendom. It is a fire burning ever on the altar of this land and age. Is *selfishness* the animating principle in the mind of the heathens? Is it not so even in conventional Churches? The object of all prayers, the aim of all subscriptions, the burden of all sermons, is to get away into a world better than this. What spiritual good, then, will the heathen gain by coming over to conventional Christianity?

I have been tempted to enter so fully into this subject that those who for years have wondered that I have stood aloof from an enterprise in which I was once an enthusiast, may see that I have reasons which at least satisfy myself on the point. It

is not with me a question of temper, but of conviction. With none of its officials or adherents have I ever had contention. So far as I know, I am on friendly terms with them all; although I confess things have occurred from time to time in connection with the executive in Blomfield Street, that have often pained me to the heart—the unseemly quarrels of the late Dr. Andrew Reed of Hackney, John Blackburn of Claremont, Arthur Tidman, and others; the miserable discussions that arose between Edwin Davies, one of the missionaries, and the Directors, on account of their vindicating one of their execrable hirelings who opened his private letters and exposed their contents, and which led to an action at law; the cold and formal way with which letters from missionaries, often burning with enthusiasm, were often received; and, in fact, the worldly spirit which seemed to preside over all the workings of this Society at head quarters. Verily, like most of the religious societies founded some sixty or seventy years ago by men who were burning with the genuine Christly passion of love for souls, it has degenerated into a mere business undertaking. They were once *organizations*, they were vital and self-growing; they are now mere *machinery*, worked in the same spirit, though not so effectively, as joint-stock companies. I know there are men who call these “glorious institutions,” and who, at public meetings, will perhaps hurl fulminations at me for these utterances. They are “glorious institutions” no doubt, inasmuch as they have the power of glorifying their advocates. Life, however, is becoming too serious for me to care aught about people’s opinions, or to suppress a single conviction that I hold.

From what I have written on this subject, I draw two conclusions which have struck their roots deep into my spiritual consciousness,—

First: That you must convert the *conventional* Church before you can *spiritually* convert the heathen. “Unless,” said the Archbishop of Canterbury, “we take some steps for converting the heathen, the heathen will be converting us.” What steps shall be taken? The calling of “Church Congresses” to consider the desirability of effecting alterations in the Prayer Book, such as the modification of some creeds, the expunging of others, and the creation of new ones? Or to consider whether the priest shall turn westward or eastward, bow to this or that—wear white cotton or black silk in his public ministrations? Or to contrive how best to perpetuate and strengthen the golden chain that binds the Church to civil patronage? Or to adopt the best plan for obtaining funds

to increase the number of ecclesiastical edifices? All this I solemnly believe is but a childish trifling with spiritual realities. Such work to me seems as senseless and as futile as the attempt to restore a dead tree in a forest by tying green branches to its trunk, or painting it with the hues of life. The steps to be taken, I venture to suggest to the Lord Primate of all England, are efforts to promote the quickening of all into a new spiritual life.

The life of a true Church consists in that spirit of self-sacrificing love which Christ inculcated in His teaching, exemplified in His life, and brought out with a moral omnipotence in His death—the life which St. Paul had when he said, “The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.” This is Christianity, nothing else. It is not Churchism nor Dissent, it is the spirit of Christ. Christ said to Peter, “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” Peter had been converted before, but he wanted re-conversion in order to be spiritually useful. It is so with the British Churches; they must be converted—converted from worldliness to spirituality, from seeming to reality, from ecclesiastical greed, pageantry, and pride to love and humility, from form to life—the life of Christ, before they can ever have power to convert the heathen.

The other conclusion I draw is,—

Secondly: That you must convert the heathen *in London* before you can convert them *abroad*. How the Archbishop,—with the apprehension of the heathen here in London converting us,—could encourage the sending out a few men at an enormous cost, to convert the teeming millions of heathendom, passes my comprehension. If we cannot convert them in London, how can we convert them in India, in China, in Egypt, or Japan? Dr. Harvey Goodwin, the Bishop of Carlisle, says, “We must expect a Hindoo to form his judgment from the general impression made by that which commonly meets his eye, and not by exceptional cases of excellence. If we expect to move the Hindoos to join us, it must be by making our light so shine that they can see it. The missionaries’ task would be comparatively a simple one if he could say to the natives of any heathen country, ‘If you would only come home with me you would perceive what a blessing it is I am now offering to you: if you could see England, you would easily understand what I want to make your country.’ To

this test dare he hold up England as the proof of what his teaching can do? Whether he dare or not, his teaching must and will be put to the test. The Hindoos do come to see what a Christian country is; and if they go back disappointed or mocking, as some of them do, how can we be the 'salt of the earth'? how can we be the 'light of the world'?"

More and more convinced am I that you must convert London before you can convert the world. If Paul's heart was "stirred within him when he beheld Athens," we may well weep tears of blood over the moral condition of our London. For many reasons it would be easier to convert London than any other city in the world; and when converted, what an evangelist would it become! London is a fountain of influence, whose streams meander through all the institutions, cities, towns, villages, mansions, and hovels of the civilized world. It is madness to suppose that you can win victories in the battle on foreign shores if you have not London on your side. We must be Christians before we can make Christians. Christliness of life can alone convert the world. There is no other light that will scatter heathen darkness, no other heat that will thaw the icy heart of universal man into the crystal streams of grace and truth.*

(To be continued.)

* To show that the heathens abroad are not much worse than the conventional Christians at home, we subjoin a few extracts from the sayings of Buddha, as recorded in the "Dharnapada," which will show better than any description the pure and exalted character of Buddhist morality and teaching. These we read according to Professor Max Müller's translation:—

"He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me; hatred in those who harbour such thoughts will never cease.

"He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me; hatred in those who do not harbour such thoughts will cease.

"For hatred does not cease by hatred at any time; hatred ceases by love; this is an old rule.

"Do not have evil doers for friends; have virtuous people for friends, have for friends the best of men, do not have low people.

"All men tremble at punishment, all men fear death; remember that you are like them, and do not kill nor cause slaughter.

"Do not speak harshly to anybody; those who are spoken to will answer thee in the same way. Angry speech is painful; blows for blows will touch thee.

"By one's self the evil is done, by one's self one suffers; by one's self evil is left undone, by one's self one is purified. Purity and impurity belong to one's self; no one can purify another.

"Better than sovereignty over the world, better than going to heaven, better than lordship over the world, is the reward of the first step in holiness.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE HUMILIATION OF CHRIST, IN ITS PHYSICAL, ETHICAL, AND OFFICIAL ASPECTS. By ALEX. B. BRUCE, D.D. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 38 George Street.

This is the sixth series of the Cunningham Lectures, and it contains six lectures. The subject of the first, is Christological Axioms; and under this we have: The Purpose of the Author explained, the Doctrine of the States in Dogmatic Systems, The Kenotic School, The Advantages of the Method, The Axioms Difficult to Fix, The Previous Question, Phil. ii. 5-9 Explained, The Axioms thence deduced, Christ's humiliation in Epistle to the Hebrews, Doctrine of the Homousia there taught, The Humiliation a Glorification, Two Additional Axioms, Plan of the Course. The subject of the second lecture is the Patristic Christology; and under this we have: The Formula of Chalcedon, Apollinarian Theory of Christ's Person, Criticism of the Theory, Nestorian Controversy, Cyril on the Kenosis, Theodoret on the Kenosis, Cyril on Christ's Ignorance, Eutychianism, Leo's Letter to Flavian, The Dreary Period of Christology, John of Damascus, Thomas Aquinas, New Ideas in the Summa, Christ both Comprehensor and

“‘Not to commit any sin, to do good, and to purify one's mind, that is the teaching of the Awakened (Buddha).

“‘Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good; let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth.

“‘Many men whose shoulders are covered with the orange gown (*i.e.*, are priests), are ill-conditioned and unrestrained; such evil doers, by their evil deeds, go to hell.

“‘A man does not become a Brāhmana by his plaited hair, by his family, or by both; in whom there is truth and righteousness, he is blessed, he is a Brāhmana.

“‘What is the use of plaited hair, O fool! What of the raiment of goats' skins? Within thee there is ravening, but the outside thou makest clean.

“‘He who is free from anger, dutiful, virtuous, without weakness, and subdued, who has received his last body, him I call indeed a Brāhmana.

“‘He who is tolerant with the intolerant, mild with fault-finders, free from passion among the passionate, him I call indeed a Brāhmana.’”

Vitator. The subject of the third lecture is the Lutheran and Reformed Christologies; and under this we have: Origin of the Controversy, Stages of the Controversy, The Christology of John Brentz, The Christology of Martin Chemnitz, The Formula of Concord, Lutheran Christology Criticized, The Reformed Christology, The Reformed Christology Criticized, By the Loges through His Spirit, Double Consciousness or Double Life, Realism of Reformed Christology, Zanchius and Hulsius on Christ's Ignorance, The Homousia in Reformed Christology. The subject of the fourth lecture is the modern Kenotic Theories; and under this we have: Revelation of these Theories to the old Christologies, Zinzendorf Father of Modern Kenosis, Four Types distinguished, The Theory of Thomasius, Theory of Gess, Theory of Ebrard, Theory of Martensen, Criticism of these Theories. The subject of the fifth lecture is, Christ, the Subject of Temptation and Moral Development; and under this we have: Physical Infirmities a Source of Temptation, Hilary denied the Physical Infirmities, Causes of Hilary's Error, Adoptionist View of Christ's Humanity, Menken and Irving Taught same Views, Temptation and Sinlessness, *potuit non* and *non potuit*, Christ's Moral Development, Christ Perfected, how? Christ's Priesthood when begun? Is a Sinless Development possible? The subject of the sixth and last lecture is the Humiliation of Christ in its official aspect; and under this we have: Christ's Humiliation as an Apostle, Socinian Theory of Salvation, Christ's Humiliation as a Priest, Sympathy a Source of Suffering, Sympathy Theory of Atonement, Christ as Priest a Representative, Christ as Victim a Substitute, Theory of Redemption by Sample, Mystic and Legal Aspects of Atonement compatible, Were Christ's Sufferings Penal? MacLeod Campbell's Theory, Bushnell's Latest Views, Manifold Wisdom of God in Redemption, Justice and Love both Satisfied, Ritsch and Arnold on the Leading Idea of the Bible, Christ's Fellowship with His Father uninterrupted, Under Divine Wrath during whole State of Humiliation, Did Christ suffer Eternal Death? Acceptilation Theory, Elements of Value in the Atonement, Scriptural Representations of Christ's Sufferings, Summary Formula, Philippi's Equation, Theories of Atonement Classified. Besides this, there is an Appendix of some 100 pages. The synopsis which we have given will give the reader a full idea of the materials of this work. The way in which these materials are brought together and represented command our respect for the learning, the industry, and the ability of the accomplished Author.

ALLEGORIES AND TALES. By REV. W. E. HEYGATE, M.A. London: Rivingtons, Waterloo Place.

This is a book containing elements of literature always more or less interesting. Many of these allegories are grand stirring conceptions, told out with power for a moral purpose. He who possesses this book is almost sure to keep it by him, until from allegory to allegory he passes to the end, and then begins anew. It is a book of rare attraction.



The Leading Homily.

DIVINE REWARDS.*

“THEN CAME TO HIM THE MOTHER OF ZEBEDEE’S CHILDREN WITH HER SONS, WORSHIPING HIM, AND DESIRING A CERTAIN THING OF HIM. AND HE SAID UNTO HER, WHAT WILT THOU? SHE SAITH UNTO HIM, GRANT THAT THESE MY TWO SONS MAY SIT, THE ONE ON THY RIGHT HAND, AND THE OTHER ON THE LEFT, IN THY KINGDOM. BUT JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID, YE KNOW NOT WHAT YE ASK. ARE YE ABLE TO DRINK OF THE CUP THAT I SHALL DRINK OF, AND TO BE BAPTIZED WITH THE BAPTISM THAT I AM BAPTIZED WITH? THEY SAY UNTO HIM, WE ARE ABLE. AND HE SAITH UNTO THEM, YE SHALL DRINK INDEED OF MY CUP, AND BE BAPTIZED WITH THE BAPTISM THAT I AM BAPTIZED WITH: BUT TO SIT ON MY RIGHT HAND, AND ON MY LEFT, IS NOT MINE TO GIVE, BUT IT SHALL BE GIVEN TO THEM FOR WHOM IT IS PREPARED OF MY FATHER.”—*Matt. xx. 20–23.*

WITH a dim perception of His objects and a feeble feeling of His divinity, but with sincerity, these two disciples had attached themselves to Christ’s company and His fortunes. Something in that wonderful Person and Ministry,—they hardly yet know what it is,—has drawn them honestly to Him; and the attachment grows with a growing intimacy every day. But presently there creeps in a thought for their private position which is the first form of selfishness, and then a thought for their national ambition and revenge, damaging the whole-heartedness and beauty of their devotion. They are loyal to the great and good Master they have found, but they are not yet Christlike enough to forget that His

* We reprint this sermon as one of the best antidotes we know to the selfish Christianity which has become rampant in these days in our England.

imperial ascendancy will probably bring with it their own promotion. They really mean to be true to His interests; but they are not so far spiritualized as not to be thinking that they can at the same time serve His interests and advance their own. They are following, but following half-unconsciously for a personal reward.

Christ's answer is not for these seekers of office only, nor for place-hunters in our day only, but for all men who would think of being Christians for a compensation, in whatever form we give that compensation shape—in a secular civilization, in public prosperity, in agreeable society, in our neighbours' confidence, votes, trade, esteem, or in personal happiness. He says, You may drink of my cup, which will often be bitter; you may be baptized with my baptism, which may be one of fire and blood; but you are not to think of honour and rewards: those are all of so different a sort and are to come in ways so different from those you dream of now, that if I were to tell you what they are, you would only marvel and doubt. Wait! Think nothing about sitting on my right and my left, in my new kingdom, which is even far newer and stranger than you imagine. Follow on in my path. Do all the daily work of a disciple. Take up my cross, and learn what its great redemption means. Warm and enlarge your hearts with my Holy Spirit. Be concerned about your service and sacrifice, not about the recompense.

This introduces the doctrine of *Divine Rewards*. For what reason is Christ to be sought? Out of what motive is His will to be done? Is it because He has the power to make us miserable, and the power to make us happy? And so is it for the hope of getting payment or for the fear of getting punished, which are only opposite sides of one and the same principle; or is it from another reason altogether, viz., out of the affection, the reverence, the trust, and the gratitude due to His Divinity and awakened in us by His goodness? As the answer to these questions affects the very motive out of which men begin and pursue a religious life or refuse to do so, the subject is of course abundantly practical. Is not one of

the main reasons why Christian faith exercises such an imperfect power among men, that they misapprehend the sort of advantage they may expect to get from it? There appear to be three principal desires which direct attention to religious truth. The first of these, and the lowest in the order of moral purity, is a want of personal comfort. Those actuated by this motive have heard that religion makes life happier, eases its burdens, lightens its labours, heals its pains, and generally gratifies the sensibilities. That is, on the whole, it will be a pleasanter thing to live with some religious emotion and protection than without. The idea that this pleasure will be of a higher character than sensual or worldly pleasure, is not entirely forgotten, but it is secondary. Comfort first, nobleness afterwards. And so this class, deciding that they will get more happiness from religion than by any other process, go in search of a religion.

The second want, is that of moral guidance, or a rule to act by, and is of a much higher grade than the first. Persons under this motive, having got clear of a supreme concern for comfort, look out on life as a school for training in right exercises and for the practice of the virtues. They are conscious of being under the weight of a tremendous law or command which they must obey. Their interpretation of Christianity is summed up in the maxim to keep the commandment. But the world is a perplexed scene, they find. One way of doing right seems to conflict with another way. The paths cross and re-cross each other. It is a tangled labyrinth. A thousand questions of casuistry come up. The problems are hard to solve. Too much is thrown on a short-sighted intellect and an infirm heart. Besides, duty as duty, by compulsion, is not inspiring, but drudgery. God's law, even if known, can never be perfectly kept, but is broken somewhere by fallen men continually, from sheer inability to do the right thing at the right time in the right way. Such persons go to religion to help out their deficiencies; but they go to it rather reluctantly as to a rule,—not as an inspiration, nor for love of it.

The third want is of a different character. It has no regard

to selfish satisfaction whatever, whether by agreeable emotions or the complacencies of good performance or exemption from the fear of penalty for bad performance. It is, so to speak, a want of giving and loving, of giving to the Lord what the soul feels belongs to Him—affection and gratitude; a want of loving and of rendering all the hearty service that love inspires. It is a spiritual aspiration. It would pour out freely and for ever the spontaneous tribute of a glad and self-forgotten spirit. It does not stop to inquire so much about the pleasure to be got out of piety, nor about the commands that apply to conduct. It springs straight up by an impulse whose proper name is faith, and puts the whole heart into the keeping of the Holy One, to let Him have it and mould and fashion it as He will. Meditating on the Divine excellence and mercy and sacrifice, it feels that He is the irresistible object of a devotion uncalculating and unlimited, which it would be impossible to keep back. It ceases to calculate, and hardly even prays to be made happy. It is the desire of a harmonious and affectionate union with God in the reconciling and forgiving spirit of the Saviour.

Here are three motives sending men to religion. After their simple statement, no man needs to be informed which is the loftiest and the best. Not that each of them is necessarily free from any intermixture with the others. They may be blended in different degrees. But one of them is likely in every case to predominate strongly over the other two; and so each of them is represented among us by a distinct class of persons, with specimens that all of us have seen—the religionists of self-gratification, the religionists of moral obedience, and the religionists of spiritual aspiration and affection, or of faith.

Next, be reminded that these three different wants spring up from different places or faculties in our nature.

The first comes from a mixture of natural instinct and shrewdness, which we commonly call by the suspicious name of self-interest. When that feeling turns to religion it acts in different constitutions in various ways, from the hypocrite who

puts on the profession of Christianity and goes through its ceremonies merely as a means of advancement or social currency in a Christian community, to the sincere and aching sufferer who applies to the New Testament precisely as he would to a medical adviser to be rid of pain. Between these are many degrees of character—the dishonest formalist, deserving nothing but disgust; the bereaved mourner, or the victim of misfortune or teachery or disease, who carries an agonized and dissatisfied heart to the Bible for a cure, and is to be met in a spirit of tender compassion. But none the less is it a serious question for every one of us, how far self-interest in any of its shapes is at the bottom of our religious pretensions, because just so far as it is, these pretensions are hollow, we are on the wrong road, and are estranged from the large and beautiful soul of our Lord, Whose greatest work is sacrifice and Whose name is Love.

The second want comes from the region of the conscience. Conscience exacts obedience. It refers to a law. It speaks of the irreconcilable opposition between what is right and what is wrong. It is the seat of morality, and governs all our moral action. It is the noble faculty that rules by Divine right over the appetites and even the understanding. All honour to obedience simply as obedience, to duty as duty, to men and women who try to find out God's command and keep it! They are not far from the kingdom of heaven, and, keeping on, shall surely come there. Among the nobilities and glories of religious character this is next to the very highest, and second only to the life of love. No man can be a complete or Christian man who slights conscience. It is what regulates most of our human intercourse and social relationships. It gives up business and amusements, commerce and personal habits, with mighty restraints, checking all manner of excess, forbidding fraud, and instigating many righteous deeds. Its demands are just and it has a right to be satisfied. Nor can those be mistaken who go to the Saviour to satisfy it. For it can be thoroughly enlightened and kept quick-sighted nowhere but in Him. Yet this need not make

us confound the religion of conscience, which is somewhat legal and rigid alone, with the religion of spiritual aspiration and affection—of Christ's faith.

The want of this third kind originates, not in the understanding, nor the passions, nor the conscience, but in the soul and the soul's peculiar activity—especially, as was said, in its love, its trust, and its gratitude. These do not so much send us in search of a religion; for love, trust, gratitude, directed to the soul's Saviour, constitute the Christian religion. They are the thing itself, in its divinest purity and dignity. Filial love, trust, gratitude, rising to the Father, are greater than anything a servant in the bondage of the law can know, and more glorious than the fairest form of self-interest. They are the peculiar brightness and power of the Christian style of religion. They exalt the faith of Jesus over every other principle. They bind the heart in generous and immortal fellowship with Him Who is the Light and Life. It becomes evident enough, how out of these three fountains flow three sorts of religious life, as distinct from one another as their sources are. One we may call the religion of calculation; the second, the religion of duty; the third, the religion of holy love. This last is pre-eminently the religion of Christ. It is what we find in the New Testament. It is our Gospel. Here the willing and affectionate heart, touched by grace, and springing freely up to the Father, adores no longer a Judge, but a Friend, not a Lawgiver merely, but a Redeemer. It takes up all the law, but looks at it in the light of love. It keeps the commandments, but from another motive—not *as* commandments, but as the will of Him whom it delights to honour, and in whose bosom it longs for ever to dwell. We have now prepared ground from which we can look more clearly at the rewards God promises to those that diligently seek Him. They depend, in each case, on the motive and spirit in which we serve Him.

First, of all then, religion will never yield its true rewards to those that seek it *for the sake of its rewards*. It deals very frankly with us, having no concern to make proselytes under

false pretences. It is willing we should understand that those who court it for anything else than its Giver's sake will meet perpetual disappointment. Whatever else they may get, it will not be Christian peace. Men may carry their selfishness into their religion, or rather into certain religious formalities and observances, as into everything else. But they will bring away only what they take in. If you espouse the Christian cause only to better your social position or your business prospects, you will find you have grasped a phantom. You only provide an accumulated fund of shame, against the hour when the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open. Under the pretence of seeking God, you have only put on a mask, and gone on seeking and serving yourself. God has never engaged to be a "Rewarder" of such; for it is not Him that they seek. But suppose you rise a step above this covetousness for outward gain, and enter on what is called a religious life for a better kind of comfort, as for example to obtain relief for sorrow, or the satisfaction of self-approval. No man can say that in such cases God may not lead the soul on, through this half-selfish state, into serving Him for some more disinterested affection. His compassion is boundless; the very contact of the mind with Him in any way is hallowing; and He is willing to save to the uttermost the weary and stricken hearts that lift their eyes from earth to heaven. But just so long, and just to the same extent, as their motive is personal comfort, they will fail of any glorious reward. I have known persons to be so haunted and scourged by some great grief or suffering that they were ready to try any new prescription to get rid of the aching. They begin at the wrong point, with a wrong idea, and cannot succeed. What they need first of all, is a renunciation of the worldly and selfish heart they are still carrying in their bosoms; and because it is offensive to the pure God, what they need is the change that will put them at once into thorough reconciliation by faith with the Spirit of Christ, fixing their chief interest to a new centre. Gaining this, regardless of comfort, and willing to suffer on even, if that should be the Divine purpose, so entire is their subjection of unworthy

self to the blessed Hand,—saying with the great-hearted patriarch, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him,”—comfort will come fast enough of itself; and precisely because they did not ask nor think of rewards,—knowing in fact that, sinners as they were, they deserved none, and if they had done their very best, had done only what it was their duty to do,—the most splendid of all rewards will suddenly appear.

There is a deeper meaning than we sometimes seize in that saying, that God will reward every man “*according to his works*,” not merely in proportion to his works and in some way or other, but in one way, and that way according to his works, in the line of his works, in the kind of them—love for love, purity for purity, faith for faith, heaven (which is perfect holiness) for holiness. Precisely in that temper Paul said, “What is my reward, then, for preaching the Gospel? Verily, that when I preach the Gospel, I may make the Gospel of Christ without charge.” So Christ puts the disinterested spirit at the very centre and core of the whole message—Drink of my cup, be baptized with my baptism; no matter where you sit, on thrones or footstools! Do good and lend, hoping for nothing again, and your reward shall be great, for ye shall be the children of the Highest.

In this honourable quality, man’s Christian service is not disconnected from his best acts in other lines of life. The higher sentiments answer with Antipater of Macedon, who, being presented with a work on happiness, replied that he had no time to study happiness. Those memorable and inspired deeds that waken the world’s delight and live on its tongue, are never done for a price. All heroic achievements, the sublime sacrifices of man for man, of ease for right, of life for love, of self for country, stand clear of calculation for reward. The moment history has to say of a man, “He did it for pay, and took his wages, he played the hero by bargain,” that moment she strikes him from her catalogue of heroes, and kindles her enthusiasm at other fountains. The friendship that gives blood and breath for a friend, the martyrdom that is borne cheerfully for faith, the patriotism that faces death

or crucifixions of feeling worse than death—these, and all of the same high race of magnanimities, spring from uncalculating affections. So our instincts demand, and so the facts testify. In these august enterprises of the soul, all thought of recompense, and even of obligation, is gone. Moral revolutions are not brought to market. Oppressed peoples are not set free for a consideration. Terrible wrongs are not righted with an eye to the main chance. A State is never made illustrious by its office-seekers.

A Church will never “arise and shine, the glory of the Lord being risen upon it,” through the agency of those who are ambitious to enjoy its dignities and administer its affairs, whether Hildebrands and Gregorys, or village popes and parish demagogues. And in the quiet joys of everyday life, and the graces of household devotion, the delicious charm and the beauty never lie in the computed service, but in the willing offering for love’s dear sake alone.

If these are the nobilities of man elsewhere, we need not hesitate to recognise them as legitimate in our Christianity. Indeed, it is Christianity that interprets and sanctions them. When we go down into its deeps, through the words of Jesus, or through the lives and confessions of its strongest believers, or through a profound experience, we come to the same discovery. Man is meant to live his best life, not because he must, not because he shall smart and ache if he does not, nor yet because he shall be made happy,—he, in his little selfish paradise of personal comfort, if he does. Christ’s Gospel holds another language, offers a more inspiring doctrine, reads man’s deeper soul by a heavenlier lamp. Its central idea is self-sacrifice. Its everlasting symbol is a cross. Its universal sentiment is love. All its apparatus of punishments and rewards, threats and promises, which are certainly very real and very frequent, is to educate us up to that mark at last. If we are below it, the law as law must come in, to train us up to it. Command, obligation, duty, must rule and discipline us in that elementary stage. The law is our school-master to lead us on to Christ, just as in earthly schools the

scholar is taught by coercion to live and learn from higher motives. In the frame-work of compulsory discipline he grows up to seek knowledge for its own sake and to study from love of it, which is the highest result of any education. Duties Christ teaches must be done as duties, work as work, till, in the regenerate spirit of His own self-forgetful devotion, we do them spontaneously, or do them, even as He died for us, for love.

Here too we shall find the peculiar and distinctive ministry which the Christian revelation brings. Precisely what the world wanted, was a being near, visible, palpable; good enough, gracious and divine enough, to inspire an affection or a faith of such mighty energy as to breathe in this new motive and start the moral life of men from a new point. And this came in Christ our living, suffering Lord. The unseen Jehovah had done much for His people; but in the distant Deific Providence man had not seen yet that last and crowning proof of mercy, a willingness to suffer for the beloved's sake. In Christ, in all His humiliation, and most of all at Gethsemane and Calvary, that is embodied. And whosoever has in him the grateful and believing sense of it is a new creature. He lives again; he lives for ever. It is the regeneration. It is the life eternal. No more to sit on the right hand or the left of kingly power and splendour; no more for outward reward, no more for fear, no more as a servant obeying the rigorous and literal commandment; but as the loving child with filial discipleship he lives for God. All the weighty and striking words of the New Testament and its new and Divine philosophy are fulfilled in him. He walks with Christ, rooted and built up in Him. He has put on the Lord Jesus. Christ is verily formed within him, a new creation—a spiritual personal life, which is the life of self-forgetful, of more than obedient, of trusting love. Nor can it be said to derogate from the virtuous character of this unsordid fidelity, that it is merely impulsive and partakes of the fitfulness and uncertainty of impulse. To be spontaneous and to be impulsive are not the same thing. The acts of the maturest, most rational, most

thoroughly disciplined saint may be just as spontaneous and just as natural as the simplest instincts of the child. It only requires that the inward life shall be so full, so harmonized, and so holy, that its acts shall proceed as it were unconsciously from it, by a choice so constant and ready that the mind does not seem even to choose. In fact, this is probably the highest result of religious discipline. Friction ceases, effort is lost in free allegiance. Only it is now not instinct only, as in infancy, but the instinct of the convicted soul and principled 'conscience of the man "born again of the Spirit" into the kingdom of Christ. It differs from the spontaneity of childhood just as the purity of the man from the purity of the child. It has been tried by temptation, and had its fight with the world. There has been the struggle of passion and the warfare with evil. Between this and that lie all the conflict, and trial, and agony, and experience of the converted heart and the developed life. They differ as Peter the consistent Apostle, fervent and self-renouncing, from Peter the natural man, hot and self-asserting. Command has been obeyed. Law has done its work. But now constraint is swallowed up in the Christlike eagerness of doing good because it is good, and all things for the Father's glory.

The same principle must be applied to the desire of going to heaven as a motive to religious endeavour. Just so far forth as I desire to go to heaven for the sake of any personal pleasures to be enjoyed there,—because it is a place where there is more ease, or an endless round of festivities and happy excitements,—so far I degrade the true conception of heaven, and prepare a certain disappointment for myself. But if we hope for the next life as a scene of larger spiritual freedom, nobler opportunities, and an escape from all sin and meanness, we are right to long for our immortality. The kingdom of heaven is a state of spiritual purity, not meat and drink. This is the sense in which Christ always holds out to us the promise of a hereafter. "Set your affections on things above," He says, *i.e.*, noble, exalted, disinterested, divine things—eternal truth, a Christian life, God's love, angelic holi-

ness ; not easy, comfortable, pleasant, good-tasting things. When He says, "Your reward shall be great in heaven," He is speaking of disinterested conduct, and He means that its whole consciousness and feeling shall be lofty and serene as heaven ; and He assures the spiritually minded who have faith in Him, that they shall have eternal life. But He nowhere offers us heaven as a price for good behaviour, as foolish parents, or rather wicked parents, hire their children to obey with sweetmeats and toys. It is in no such sense as this that He engages to be a rewarder of them that seek Him. The very passage just quoted discredits such a thought ; for it says, "If ye love them that love you, what reward have ye ?" There must be a spontaneous service. The heart must go into it, uncalculating and ungrudging. You must love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and bless them that curse you, and lend hoping for nothing again. Then you will be children of the Highest ; and, precisely because you expected no reward at all, verily your reward shall be great.

There is a striking legend of saintly old Bishop Ivo, who walks with God, and saw through the self-seeking religionists of his time, and longed for larger faith. He describes himself as meeting, one day, a figure in the form of woman, of a sad earnest aspect, like some prophetess of God, who carried a vessel of fire in one hand, and of water in the other. He asked her what these things were for. She answered, "The fire is to burn up paradise, and the water to quench hell, that men may henceforth serve their Maker, not from the selfish hope of the one, nor from the selfish fear of the other, but for love of Himself alone." God does not consume paradise, nor quench hell. He keeps the fountains of sweet and living waters leaping and flowing in the one, He keeps the awful fires of the other burning. But surely all this promise and penalty do not mean that we are to stop in their discipline, and calculate the price of our obedience. Oh no ! Not while the glorious voice of the Apostle rings out over the centuries, "The love of Christ constraineth me : I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Him." Not while the

Saviour says to the aspiring heart of the world, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect," "hoping for nothing again."

So we come up at last to those acts of the true religion—our Christian religion,—which are done in the faith of the heart; and here we reach the highest view of the Divine rewards, simply because God has made these to be their reward. The reward is in doing them; in the inevitable feeling that goes along with them, far enough from being set about as the end, but interwoven with them by the gracious bounty that ever surprises faithful souls. With all these true acts and emotions of the really spiritually-minded man, it is precisely as it is with any of those acts of common life that the heart goes most into. You cannot speak of any rewards for the love that is the bond of a true marriage, without insulting those to whom you speak. You cannot connect the notion of compensation pay with the affection that twines a child's arms about the mother's neck, or that keeps her waiting in vigils that out-watch the patient stars over the child's pain or sin, without profaning that affection. You cannot associate the prospect of a reward with the heroic humanity which keeps the friendly vessels hanging close, many days and nights, in the frightful companionship of a common peril, to take off the passengers of the imperilled and sinking ship, nor with any generous and brave rescue or sacrifice. Now, to any spiritual estimate, the services of daily piety are as full of the charm and fascination and glory of self-forgetting devotion as any of these. Christ is nearer than wife or husband. The Father in heaven is more real, and infinitely holier and tenderer, than the human mother. All fellow-souls in moral misery or sin need help more urgently than the shipwrecked company. And so, if our piety is real, like Christ's piety, it must be just as self-oblivious, as hearty, as spontaneous and free as that. And then it will have a more unspeakable, glorious, infinite reward.

These then are the Divine rewards. They are rewards in kind. They are large just according to the spirituality of

our lives, the zeal of our worship, the strength of our faith. They are interior, not visible. They are incidental, not sought. They are of nobleness, rather than of happiness. Sometimes "the Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him," will reward the true Christian soul by giving him a strengthening and encouraging consciousness of harmony with the Divine will; sometimes by taking him out from under the power of temptation or a straitened self-accusation, and setting his feet in a large place. Sometimes by redoubling his spiritual energy and quickening his Christian activity, breathing a prompter zeal into all the secret forces of his being, through the unseen agencies of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes by giving him a blessed sense of renunciation, of having given up all to Him to whom all of right belongs, together with an exalted sense of liberty from all limitations of appetite and ambition. Sometimes by affording us great satisfaction in our appointed struggles and our every-day drudgery, and sometimes too, by granting us,—provided we do not ask it too eagerly, as if it were better for us than toil,—an inward peace, or rest from care and from strife and from fear, passing all understanding,—such as the world never gave.

I have read of a devoted sister of charity who, year after year, attended a division of the army of France in every campaign, to care for the wounded and watch with the sick. Her energy, courage, gentleness, and presence of mind saved many lives, and gained her the reverence and admiration of officers and men. On the field of slaughter and agony, her impartial, Christlike compassion made no distinction between her own people and the enemy; and three foreign empires,—Russia, Austria, and Prussia,—conferred upon her crosses of honour. From her own nation it was contrary to the rules of her order that she should receive any badge or decoration, as a reward for her services. But the gratitude of the generous soldiers found out a way to remunerate her as beautiful as it was appropriate. Knowing well whence her lofty pleasures sprang, they petitioned and obtained for her from the Minister of War, the privilege of pardoning, every year, two criminals

condemned to death. This is what I mean by rewards *in kind*. It gives us, I think, some feeble conception of what may be the noble joy and the spiritual recompense of heaven.

“For when the power of imparting good
Is equal to the will, the human soul
Requires no other heaven.”

“If we love one another, God dwelleth in us.” But, oh greater mystery yet! which faith must still accept, or die,—for God leads us to Himself through ways that we know not,—He rewards us sometimes, in His deepest love, only by setting us to the performance of larger and harder tasks, only by beckoning us on to steeper heights, with sharper rocks, where we must climb; only by handing down to us grander opportunities of endurance; only by calling us on and up, with His own animating voice, to some more splendid because more grievous sacrifices. These also, to the truly brave and truly consecrated heart, are rewards. On the heads of some of His children God sets special sufferings as crowns of honour, as signs what great things He has yet in reserve for them, because He will make these crosses ladders of light whereby they shall ascend nearer to Himself. And to all that are truly His, when He would give His greatest reward, He gives Himself, the Holy Spirit, in His Son. Or, if we will have it set in music, we shall find it in a brave and lofty hymn of Francis Xavier :—

“My God, I love Thee, not because
I hope for heaven thereby;
Nor because they who love Thee not
Must burn eternally.

“Thou, O my Jesus, Thou didst me
Upon the cross embrace;
For me didst bear the nails and spear,
And manifold disgrace;
And griefs and torments numberless,
And sweat of agony,—
E’en death itself,—and all for one
Who was Thine enemy!

“Then why, O blessed Jesus Christ,
Shall I not love Thee well,—

Not for the sake of winning heaven
Or of escaping hell,—
Not with the hope of gaining aught,
Nor seeking a reward,
But as Thyself hast loved me,
O ever-loving Lord."

It is well to seek salvation ; that old phraseology is not mistaken. Only we must remember, salvation is not a thrifty, self-promoting concern, by which we just graze and enter the gates of Eden, and get somehow landed in a place of comfort, where there is no hard work. Christian salvation is a spiritual state, here or hereafter, where nobler and heartier service can be done for God and man. That is a weighty saying of St. Augustine : " God counts among the reprobate not only those who have received their comfort on earth, but those who grieve because they have not." It is right to exhort men to make sure their calling and election in heaven. Only, we must remember, heaven is not a spot to lie down in, and there, on our couches, tuning our harps, to think how much misery we have personally escaped. The Christian heaven is an exalted society of self-sacrificing spirits, bound together in mutual fellowship by their common consecration to Him who is above them, where each accepted soul will go from strength to strength, run and not be weary, toil and not faint, aspire and not be baffled, do good and not be misinterpreted, and will be assimilated in ever closer and closer affinity to Him who is its Light and Life, in whom whosoever liveth and believeth shall never die.

Let us fearlessly carry our standard beyond the old line of our inferior moods. And if any of us find we are seeking for a religion that shall make us comfortable or put us at ease, be sure we are asking, out of a false spirit, what no reverential prayer should dare to petition ; what cannot be,—and are no longer in a posture to receive the Master's gifts, nor the favour of our God. For of our Christian religion the badge is a cross ; even as self-forgetfulness is the spirit, love is the motive, disinterestedness is the principle, faith is the inmost spring, " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ " the first lesson and the last.

F. G. HUNTINGTON, D.D.

The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *TANAKH*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough *homiletic* treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) The *History* of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) *Annotations* of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3) The *Assessment* of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) The *Homiletics* of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

NO. CIV.

The Greatest Things of the Soul.

"O GOD, THOU ART MY GOD; EARLY WILL I SEEK THEE," etc.—
Psalms lxiii.

HISTORY.—The title ascribes this Psalm to David, and points out the time and place of its composition. It was when in the wilderness of Judah. The wilderness of Judah was that wild and uncultivated tract of country lying on the east side of the territory along the Jordan. Into this district David was not only driven in the time of Saul, but at the rebellion of Absalom; and probably at this latter time the Psalm was composed. Psalm lxi. refers to the same occasion; and here, as in that Psalm, David gives utterance to his longing for the sanctuary. Of this Psalm Delitzsch says, "it is a song of the

most delicate form and deepest spiritual contents; but in part very difficult of exposition. When we have, approximately, at least, solved the riddle of one Psalm, the second meets us with new riddles. It is not merely the poetical classic character of the language, and the spiritual depth, but also this half-transparent and half-opaque covering which lends to the Psalms such a powerful and unvarying attractiveness. They are inexhaustible, there always remains an undeciphered residue; and therefore, though the work of exposition may progress, it does not come to an end. But how much more difficult is

it to adopt this choice spiritual love-song as one's own prayer! For this we need a soul that loves after the same manner; and in the main it requires such a soul even to understand it rightly; for, as the saintly Bernard says, *lingua amoris non amanti barbara est.*"

ANNOTATIONS: Ver. 1.—"O God, Thou art my God." "Elohim, Thou art my God." "My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is." See 2 Sam. xvi. 14. As his body thirsted for water in the parched desert, so his soul thirsted for God.

Ver. 2.—"To see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary." What I thirst for is "to see Thy power and Thy glory," as once I saw it. The abruptness of the interrupted clauses accords with his excitement. The "so" is beautifully forcible. So lovable, and so fully satisfying to Thy people did I formerly behold Thee, my soul therefore now thirsts for Thee (Psalm xxvii. 4, 13). David's desire, in this Psalm and in the parallel Psalm, xlii., is to be restored to the visible sanctuary. Compare Psalm xliii. 3 with 2 Sam. xv. 25.

Ver. 3.—"Because Thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee." "Better than life." It was the originator, sustainer, and blessedness of life.

Ver. 4.—"Thus will I bless Thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in Thy name." He means to say, that on account of God's loving-kindness he would praise Him while his life lasted.

Ver. 5.—"My soul shall be satisfied with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips." The enjoyments of religion are elsewhere compared to a feast (Isaiah xxv. 6); and the idea of the Psalmist is, that, as a hungry man gets

full physical satisfaction at the banquet, so his soul would be satisfied when he should again engage in the public services of the sanctuary.

Ver. 6.—"When I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches." The word "and," which is in our version, is unnecessary, and interferes with the sense. Hence the verse has been thus translated, "When I remember Thee upon my bed, throughout the night watches do I meditate upon Thee."

Ver. 7.—"Because Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice." "Shadow of Thy wings," a favourite phrase of David (Psalms lxi. 4; xvii. 8; xci. 4).

Ver. 8.—"My soul followeth hard after Thee." Hos. vi. 3 tells us the blessed effect of this. "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord." Or translate as Hengstenberg, "My soul cleaves to Thee," as Jacob did to the angel with whom he wrestled for the blessing; and then follows, in the beautiful relation between the soul and its God, "Thy right hand upholdeth me;"—as it upheld Peter from sinking into the waters (Matt. xiv. 30, 31; Psalms xviii.; lx. 5).

Ver. 9.—"But those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth." From this to the end of the poem seems to be a contrast drawn between the rebels and the king. Whoever sought his life, whether Absalom, his followers, or others, they would be destroyed, he says.

Ver. 10.—"They shall fall by the sword." In the margin, "make him run out like water by the hands of the sword." The idea is: as one pours water out of a vessel, they shall be flung upon the hands of the sword. "They shall be a portion for foxes."

Jackals, it is supposed, are here meant. "These sinister, guilty, woe-begone brutes," says Thomson, in his "Land and the Book," "when pressed with hunger, gather in gangs among the graves, and yell in rage, and fight like fiends over their midnight orgies; but on the battlefield is their great carnival. Oh! let me never even dream that any one dear to me has fallen by the sword, and lies there to be torn and gnawed at, and dragged about by these hideous howlers."

Ver. 11.—"But the king shall rejoice in God." The use of the term king here, in the third person, does not prove that David was not the author of the Psalm.

Most authors refer to themselves at times in the third person. Though an exile, David was still the king. "*Every one that sweareth by him shall glory; but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.*" All that retain allegiance to him shall yet rejoice; but his enemies, deceivers, they that spoke lies, shall be confounded.

ARGUMENT.—This Psalm has two divisions; each begins with his soul-thirst for God in his exile from holy ordinances (vv. 1-3, 6-8). In each follows his hope for the future: in vv. 4, 5, hope of his own blessedness; in vv. 9, 10, hope of the destruction of his foes; concluding summary (v. 11) answering to title.

HOMILETICS.—This Psalm presents to us the *greatest things of the soul*. The greatest hunger, faith, exercise, satisfaction, study, and trust of the soul are the subjects that are here brought up for thought.

I. The greatest HUNGER of the soul. "My soul thirsteth for Thee." There is a physical hunger for material food, that sometimes amounts to an agony. There is an intellectual hunger—a hunger for truth—a hunger which keeps the mental faculties ever on the stretch in pursuit of knowledge—a hunger whose cry is "more light, more light." But the profoundest hunger of all, is hunger for God, "thirsting for God"—the hunger for an object on which the soul can set its supreme affections, and on which it can exercise unbounded trust. Nothing in the nature of the case can satisfy the soul but God. Hence the deep, incessant cry of the ages is, "Who will show us any good?" The soul wants God, as the thirsty land the refreshing showers, as the opening flower the sunbeam. It does not merely want His, but Him. All His universe will not satisfy it.

"Could our souls in love embrace

All the spirits dear to Thee,

Though they clasped all worlds in space,

Empty, Lord, they still would be."

II. The greatest FAITH of the soul. What is that? Loving-kindness. "Thy loving-kindness is better than life." Strange utterance this! What is loving-kindness without life? Though loving-kindness flooded the universe, were there no life it would be nothing to us. Still, what would life be without loving-kindness? Loving-kindness is indeed better than life; it is independent, it is the cause of life, the redemption of life. It is loving-kindness that supplies the wants, gratifies the desires, developes the powers of life. All the elements of soul-joy,—gratitude, admiration, moral esteem, benevolence,—are awakened by loving-kindness. Loving-kindness is heaven. It is the beauty of every leaf, the fragrance of every flower, the brightness of every star, the life of every breeze, the music of every sound, the charm of every scene, the flavour of every fruit in Paradise. Faith in this loving-kindness, is the greatest faith—greatest because it is the most soul-sustaining, soul-inspiring, soul-ennobling. Take away my faith in God's loving-kindness, and the present life becomes an intolerable mystery, and the future a sunless, starless midnight. Whatever we doubt, never may we doubt God's love.

Another thing to be noticed here is,—

III. The greatest EXERCISE of the soul. What is that? Praise. "I will bless Thee while I live, I will lift up my hands in Thy name." What is praise? Worship. What is worship? The whole soul going forth in supreme gratitude for the supremely kind, supreme admiration for the supremely good, supreme reverence and adoration for the supremely great. This is the highest exercise of the soul. It is not a service, but a life. It is not that which merely "goeth forth" in sacred music and on sacred occasions; but, as a sap in the trunk of the tree runs through all its branches and leaves and blossoms, so true praise runs through all the activities of human life.

Another thing to be noticed here is,—

IV. The greatest SATISFACTION of the soul. "My soul shall be satisfied with marrow and fatness." As the appetite of a

hungry man gets satisfied with a sumptuous banquet, so does the soul in the exercises of genuine religion. David's great desire was, "To see Thy power and glory as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary." The soul in such moods walks in a Paradise all blooming in beauty, clustering in fruit, and glowing in the sunshine of heaven. The blessedness of such a soul is ever with it. "The pleasure of the religious man," says Dr. South, "is an easy and portable pleasure, such a one as he carries about in his bosom, without alarming either the rage or the envy of the world. A man putting all his pleasure into this one, is like a traveller putting all his goods into one jewel; the value is the same, and the convenience greater."

Another thing to be noticed here is,—

V. The greatest STUDY of the soul. "When I remember Thee on my bed, and meditate in the night watches." (1) Man can think upon God. This is the grand distinction of his being. No other creature on this planet can do this. We can think on God, not merely on what He has done, but on what He is, Himself. (2) Man can think upon God on his bed. When all other objects are shut out from him, when the beautiful earth and the star-spangled heavens are excluded, God can be brought into the soul as the subject of thought. No study equal to this! None so *quickening*. The thought of God vivifies the faculties and stirs the heart. None so *humbling*. With God before the eye of thought, all egotism wanes and dies. None so *spiritualizing*. With God before the mind's eye, fleets, armies, markets, governments, the solemn globe itself and all it contains, dwindle into insignificance. None so *enlightening*. The study of God lightens up all the fields of truth. All the branches have their root in God.

Another thing to be noticed is,—

VI. The greatest TRUST of the soul. "Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice," etc. A soul trusting in God, cleaves to Him, follows hard after Him, and confidently expects the overthrow of all enemies, and ultimate deliverance out of all the trials and sufferings of this life.

CONCLUSION.—See in this Psalm what the soul is, what it wants, and in what its true greatness and blessedness consist. It has been well said by an old and distinguished author—“He that pursues any worldly interest or earthly thing as his end becomes himself also ‘earthly;’ and the more the soul directs itself to God, the more it becomes Godlike, deriving a print of that glory and beauty upon itself with which it converseth, as it is excellently set forth by the apostle: ‘But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed in the same image from glory to glory.’ It is only true goodness in the soul of man, guiding it steadily and uniformly towards God, directing it and all its actions to the one last end and chief good, that can give it a true consistency and composedness within itself.”

HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF JOB.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering; but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

No. LXVIII.

The Common in Controversy, Sin, and Theology.

“SURELY THOU HAST SPOKEN IN MINE HEARING,” etc.—*Job xxxiii.* 8-18.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS: Ver. 8.—

“*Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words.*” This language shows that Elihu had been present during the debate, and had paid profound attention to all that had been said.

Ver. 9.—“*I am clean without transgression, I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me.*” He here professes to quote the very words which he heard Job utter. But where are those words recorded? Nowhere throughout the record of the dis-

cussion can we find them. It is true that Job had maintained that he was not guilty of the transgressions of which his friends had charged him; but nowhere does he declare his absolute innocency.

Ver. 10, 11.—“*Behold, He findeth occasions against me, He counteth me for His enemy, He putteth my feet in the stocks, He marketh all my paths.*” In chap. xix. 11 Job had given utterance to what Elihu here states, and also in chap. xiii. 27.

Ver. 12.—“*Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee, that God is greater than man.*” “Behold, in this thou art not right, let me tell thee. Thy three friends told thee, thou must needs have done wickedly in the former part of thy life, and saying so they may have wronged thee. But I do not say so, I believe thee to have lived a righteous life, till these afflictions came upon thee; but then thou didst sin, and sin very grievously, in that thou couldest presume to utter unseemly words concerning God, because He had afflicted thee, *For God is greater than frail man.* He is a Being so great and so exalted that it is not possible to suppose He would afflict such a weak and frail being as man, unless He knew that he would be benefited by his afflictions.”

—Bernard.

Ver. 13.—“*Why dost thou strive against Him? for He giveth not account of any of His matters.*” The idea is, that it is useless to contend with God, for, whether His creatures like it or not, He

pursues His course without pause or alteration. Submission to His will, and not contention, is at once the wise and proper course of conduct.

Ver. 14.—“*God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not.*” God’s communications to man are many and numerous, yet man too often disregards them.

Ver. 15.—“*In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed.*” Dreams and visions in seasons of deep sleep were the means by which the Almighty made known His will in the earlier period of the world’s history; and I am disposed to believe that these are the means He employs in every part of the world now.

Ver. 16.—“*Then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction.*” For “openeth,” the margin has “revealeth,” or “uncovereth.” The idea is, that God makes the admonition thus communicated as secure as if a seal were affixed to it.

Ver. 17.—“*That He may withdraw man from his purpose [margin, “work”], and hide pride from man.*” The object of God’s communications to the mind of wicked men, is to turn them from their evil practices and to prevent them ruining themselves.

Ver. 18.—“*He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.*” The meaning is, that God by His warnings seeks to turn man from an evil life that will lead to his ruin.

HOMILETICS.—These words present us with three subjects of thought:—

I. A FAULT common to CONTROVERSIALISTS. What is that fault? *The exaggeration of an opponent’s opinions.* Elihu charges Job here with having said, “he was clean without

transgression, and innocent without any iniquity." There is no proof that Job said this. It is all but certain that he never gave utterance to such an untruth. He declared often that he was no hypocrite, that he was sincere, never that he was "innocent and free from all sin." Now, to *exaggerate* an opponent's error is a fault too prevalent in all controversies. How the errors of the Arminians are exaggerated by the Calvinists, errors of the Unitarians by what are called the Orthodox party, the Papists by the Protestants, the Churchmen by the Dissenters, and *vice versâ*. The Polemic takes the opinion of his opponent, and of the dwarfs he makes giants, of the innocents he makes devils, of the harmless he makes pestilent. This exaggeration springs from a variety of causes. *Pride* has much to do with it. The disputant wishes to appear as a hero, battling with Apollyons, so that if he crushes them, his triumphs will be the more signal and the more lauded. *Revenge* contributes to its existence. The mutual retorts have kindled mutual revenge, and revenge has magnified the errors on each side. *Untruthfulness*, the want of a strict adherence to truth, has left the imagination free to fabricate falsehoods. Ah me! in religious polemics some of the best men that ever lived are made to appear monsters, unworthy of life. Here we have,—

II. A SIN common to MANKIND. "Why dost thou strive against Him?" Striving against God, is the common sin of humanity. The carnal mind is at enmity with God. What is it to strive against God? It is to pursue a course of conduct contrary to His will, contrary to truth, justice, benevolence, holiness, out of harmony with the holy ordinances of nature, with the conditions of true happiness, with the progress of the world. Striving against God—(1) How *wrong*. Striving against the best Friend. (2) How *foolish*! How futile the attempt! It is a moth struggling against the flames. "Why dost thou strive against Him?" Ah, why? Has He ever done thee any harm? Hast thou any hope of success? We have here,—

III. A THEOLOGY common to THE BIBLE. What are the theological points here?

First: *The infinite superiority of God.* "God is greater than man." *Greater!* There is no comparison. You may compare a rain-drop to the Atlantic, a spark to the central fires of the universe; but between God and man there is no comparison.

Secondly: *The absolute irresponsibility of God.* "He giveth not account of any of His matters." The only moral intelligence in the universe that is irresponsible, is God. He is absolutely independent, and is under obligation to no being in the universe. He does "whatsoever seemeth good in His sight" with the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of this earth. He is not bound by law or power outside of Himself to be kind, loving, or just. Hence these attributes in Him are the more conspicuously glorious.

Thirdly: *The constant communicability of God.* "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction." God has not only access to the human mind, but access to it even irrespective of its choice or effort; He enters it when "deep sleep falleth upon men," when the senses are sealed, when the limbs are motionless, when the will is passive. Then He enters it. Not once, but often, not with one, but with all.

Fourthly: *The redemptive purpose of God.* Why does He work with men? "That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword." Colonel Gardiner, it is said, was meditating an act of wickedness, and was alone in his room awaiting the appointed hour; but in silence of the night and the solitude of his room, he had a vision of the Saviour on the cross, and this vision broke his purpose, and kept "back his soul from the pit."

SERMONIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ehrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dörner; Lange; etc., etc.

No. LXVIII.

The Man Born Blind. Types of Character in relation to Christ's Work.—2. Those who are only speculatively interested in the Work.

"THE NEIGHBOURS THEREFORE, AND THEY WHICH BEFORE HAD SEEN HIM THAT HE WAS BLIND, SAID, IS NOT THIS HE THAT SAT AND BEGGED? SOME SAID, THIS IS HE: OTHERS SAID, HE IS LIKE HIM: BUT HE SAID, I AM HE. THEREFORE SAID THEY UNTO HIM, HOW WERE THINE EYES OPENED? HE ANSWERED AND SAID, A MAN THAT IS CALLED JESUS MADE CLAY, AND ANOINTED MINE EYES, AND SAID UNTO ME, GO TO THE POOL OF SILOAM, AND WASH: AND I WENT AND WASHED, AND I RECEIVED SIGHT. THEN SAID THEY UNTO HIM, WHERE IS HE? HE SAID, I KNOW NOT. THEY BROUGHT TO THE PHARISEES HIM THAT AFORETIME WAS BLIND.—John ix. 8-13.

EXPOSITION: Ver. 8.—"*The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind.*" Here follows an account of what befell this blind man. The account is so minute, distinct, life-like, that one must conclude that the biographer had it from the very lips of the blind man himself. "*Is not this he that sat and begged?*" It would seem that they had been in the habit of seeing him as a blind man and begging.

Ver. 9.—"*Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.*" The diversity of opinions is readily accounted for by the great difference in his appearance which would be made by the removal of the most deforming of blemishes and the bestowal of the most distinguishing of features. The very difficulty which they had in believing

that he was the blind beggar, proves the perfection of the cure. Ver. 10.—"*Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?*" A very natural question.

Ver. 11.—"*He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus,*" etc. "He is therefore not acquainted with the Messianic character of Jesus. He however emphasizes the name of Jesus. He has immediately noticed the significant name, which was not the case with the impotent man of Bethesda (chap. v.). The form of his already budding faith in the prophetic dignity and Divine mission of Jesus, declares itself in verses 17 and 33; he as yet does not know Him as the Messiah (ver. 35). '*I received sight.*' *Ἀναβλέπω* means to look up, to see again. Meyer maintains against Lucke's ex-

planation, 'I looked up' (Mark xvi. 4), the 'I received sight again.' For this there is no ground in verses 15 and 18, although the explanation of Grotius, '*Nec male recipere quis dicitur, quod communiter tributum humanæ naturæ ipsi abfuit,*' is ingenious."—Lange.

Ver. 12.—"Then said they unto him, Where is He?" From this it would appear that Jesus, after the attempt to stone Him, had retired from the Temple, and still kept Himself from the public eye. The motive for asking the

question was not hostility, but a natural interest, to see and to know the author of such a work. "He said, I know not." The man had heard the voice, but had never seen the person of his Benefactor, until revealed in verse 37.

Ver. 13.—"They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind" (πρὸς τοὺς Φαρισαίους). Probably to the Sanhedrim, which sat daily, and the principal members of which were the leading Pharisees.

HOMILETICS.—The healing of this poor blind man was a very influential fact. As a stone cast into a lake throws the whole mass of water into agitation, producing circle after circle to its utmost bounds, this fact stirred into excitement the whole social sphere in which it occurred. It broke the monotony of ordinary life, it touched the springs of many minds, and filled the neighbourhood with strange thoughts and feelings. This is a striking illustration of the fact that no man "liveth to himself." What affects one, will affect many. Society is a chain, of which every man is a link; the motion of one link may vibrate through the whole chain. Society is a body, every man is a member; the pulsation of one heart will throb through every limb. There were circumstances connected with this man's healing, that tended to heighten its exciting power. He was well known. For many years, probably, he sat near that old Temple; he had been seen by thousands who periodically visited that sacred spot, and had been the subject of remark by many a passer-by; he was a kind of institution, one of the well-settled and most notable objects in that great thoroughfare. The removing of his blindness was miraculous. Such an event had never been known before. Cases of blind men whose sight had been restored, might have occurred ere then, within the knowledge of some; but this was not restoration, for he had never seen, never had a vision. It was a kind of creation; it was altogether wonderful; it stood out as

one of the most marvellous things that had ever happened. Hence the greatness of the interest awakened. The feelings produced, however, were very various.

The representative class which we have in these verses, are those who are only *speculatively interested in Christ's work*. Notice three things concerning this class:—

I. The lack of EARNESTNESS in their inquiries. Their inquiries were confined to three subjects.

First: To the *identity* of the restored man. "Is not this he that sat and begged?" The question seems to be asked in the mere spirit of curiosity. "Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him." Their difficulty in deciding his identity would arise partly perhaps from the change that the opened eye would make in his countenance, for the eye gives a character to the face, it kindles in every feature a new glory. The human eye in the face is as the moon in the night firmament, changing the whole aspect of things; and partly, and probably mainly, from the unaccountableness of the result. Though they might have felt that in nearly every respect he was like him, yet they could not believe because of the marvellousness of the change. Their inquiries were confined,—

Secondly: To the *method* of his restoration. "How were thine eyes opened?" In this question there is no ring of earnestness; it seems dictated by nothing but an ordinary curiosity. Their inquiries were confined,—

Thirdly: To the *whereabouts* of the Restorer. "Where is He?" Not, What is He? All they meant was, We should like to see this Man, who has wrought such a wonderful cure. Those who have a *mere* speculative interest in Christianity are constantly asking such questions as these. Is it so and so? How did it occur? Where is the cause? And all this with no deep genuine thirst for truth. Notice,—

II. The lack of GENEROSITY in their inquiries. They utter no congratulatory word to the restored man. There was no gush, as one might have expected, of sympathy and gratitude for the merciful deliverance. Had they been true men, the

event would have thrilled them with emotions that would have touched them into the enthusiasm of social affection. But there is not one spark of it. Their intellect seems to move in ice. So it is ever with those who are merely speculatively interested in Christianity. There is no exultation of heart on account of the millions it has blessed. It is mere cold inquiry about details. Notice,—

III. The lack of INDEPENDENCY in their inquiries. "They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind." They brought him to the judicial court, to try the question of his identity. They were not earnest enough in the matter to reach a conclusion that would satisfy themselves as to his identity. In that court to which they took him there would not be much difficulty in proving that the man was not himself, but some one else. Hostile judges can prove to a servile and ignorant jury that the man who says "I am he," is not himself but some one else. This has been done, I think, in England only within the last few years.

CONCLUSION.—Truly lamentable it is, that there are men to be found who are *only* speculatively interested in the wonderful works of Christ. What these men saw and heard should have led them to a hearty acceptance of Jesus as the true Messiah, and their consecration to Him as their Lord and Master.

MURDER.—"Thou shalt not kill." The commandment does not say, "Thou shalt not kill *privately*," from any personal feeling, leaving room for the inference that man may kill in his official capacity, and from public considerations. The language meets man as man in every capacity and position; it meets him as the judge upon the bench, as the executioner upon the scaffold, as the soldier upon the field. With this passage before us, we are bound to regard intentional killing, by whomsoever effected, however effected, and wherever effected, as a violation of God's eternal law.

The Preacher's Germs of Thought.

Food and Forgiveness.

"GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD. AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS."—

Matt. vi. 11, 12.

THE latter petition is a great step in advance of the former, and is as much above it as the spiritual is above the material, the eternal above the temporal, things unseen above things that are seen. The two requests may be classified under the same category, for they are both alike prompted by a sense of dependence upon God; yet there is a vast difference between them—the difference between victuals and pardon, between a meal and absolution. "Give us this day our daily bread;" and then, taking a long stride, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, we press toward the mark, "Forgive us our debts." We pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," standing on the low level of the brute, requiring in common with it the meat that perisheth. The eyes of all wait upon God, and He giveth them their meat in due season; He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry, and likewise to man his daily portion. The ox takes one end, and partakes of straw; man takes the other end, threshes out the grain, and converts it into bread. But how much is a man better than a sheep? We are of more value than many sparrows. Then we soar aloft, leaving the cattle on the hills below, losing sight of the barns of earth; and now, in the exercise of the powers of enlightened reason, by virtue of which we are infinitely removed from the irrational creation beneath, with which we were coupled a little while ago, we are occupying the high plane of moral accountability, elevated to a spiritual consciousness of a responsible relationship to God, and are praying, "Forgive us our debts."

Of these two blessings then, under consideration, we say,—

I. BOTH OUGHT TO BE SOUGHT. Men generally are con-

cerned more or less for the bread that cometh up from the earth, that they stand in little need of being urged to seek after it; and it is perfectly right they should be so. The Bible nowhere finds fault with men for praying for temporal blessings, but rather gives its sanction for so doing. Isolated passages of Scripture might be cited on the contrary, such as, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth;" but evidently that must be taken in its comparative sense. And when we read that, "one thing is needful," we cannot understand it to prohibit a certain amount of care and trouble for many other things, including "bread" amongst them. And even those who will not work, still think it their duty to eat and consume what others have produced in the sweat of their faces; and to beg they are not ashamed.

But men ought to be infinitely more concerned for the living bread that cometh down from heaven, which, if a man eat thereof, he shall never die. We are composed of two natures, body and soul, and these two have their respective wants; and for the supply of those of the former we are justified in praying, "Give us this day our daily bread;" and for the supply of those of the latter, we ought not to forget to pray, "Forgive us our debts." And as the soul is more than body, as the immortal is more than mortal, as heaven is more than earth, so our prayer ought to be the more earnest, "Forgive us our debts," than, "Give us this day our daily bread." "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" If there is no profit, how utterly foolish the vast majority of men are in pursuing enthusiastically so unreasonable a course, spending all their energies in trying to gain the poor things of this world, that perish actually in the using, and neglecting the interests of their immortal souls! Instead of immense profit, as we should expect, judging from their conduct, there is nothing but loss, irreparable loss; a man taking a city and hanged at the gates of it. Is not such a pursuit mad in the superlative degree?

II. BOTH ARE NOT SOUGHT ACCORDING TO THEIR WORTH. Unless it be in an inverse ratio, where the highest value is set

on the least worthy, and the lowest value is set on the most worthy. Might it not be laid down as a sound maxim, and one that would be universally accepted, in theory at least, that the most important matter should have the greatest attention? And yet how the practice of the world is at variance with it. Think of a prisoner condemned to die, giving all his time during the last few days he had to live on earth, to think of his meals, whether they would be exactly to his palate; or of his couch, whether it was as easy as it might be made; or of the general comforts of his temporary situation; and never once giving it a thought whether he might obtain pardon for his crime. All would pronounce him "insane;" but, alas! an alarmingly large number would, by the very act, unwillingly it might be, bring the verdict of insanity against themselves. They rise up early and sit up late, and are content to eat the bread of sorrows, so long as to-day or to-morrow they can go to such a city and continue there a year to buy and sell and get gain; and the thought has never entered their mind that there can be anything better than money. The priceless commodity which is more precious than rubies, they have left unsought, in that they regarded "bread" the principal thing. It is nothing but bread, bread, bread. Well, bread is good enough for the perishable part of our nature, and we ought to see that it gets it; we may pray for it and we may labour for it, but we want to be reminded that man cannot live by "bread" alone; the body may, but that is only the poorer part of man; the higher nature must have food of a better kind, or else starve for ever. We must not forget that our requirements are two-fold, corresponding to our double being. As creatures, we may pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," let our bodily wants be supplied; but when we rise to the dignity of men, sinful men as we are, we must pray, "Forgive us our debts," let our sins be pardoned, let our guilt be removed; and though the fields yield no meat, yet our chief concern shall be that we are able to rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of our salvation.

III. BOTH ARE SOUGHT IN PROPORTION AS THE WANT FOR EACH

IS FELT. It is to be feared that most men have a keener consciousness of their dependence on food than on forgiveness, and that is because they live more in the flesh than in the spirit. Their physical desires are sharpened, but their moral sensibilities are blunted; they have a longing after animal pleasures and creature comforts, but little or no craving for spiritual joys and Divine blessings. "The young lions roar after their prey and seek their meat from God," for they lack and suffer hunger. It is a sense of want that drives them roaring and prowling about for food; so it is a sense of sin that takes hold of a man and sends him begging to the throne of grace, with the prayer on his lips and in his heart, "Forgive us our debts." It is a man that feels himself in a lost condition that prays, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He throws himself helplessly at God's feet and feels there is nothing between him and everlasting perdition but Divine grace; and thus realizing his fearful and imminent danger, he cries out, and he must be excused if he calls out loud, for he cries out of the depths of his soul, "Lord, hear my voice." "O God, help me, I am poor and needy, Thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God." The man has just found out that he is a sinner, and is already heard praying, "Forgive us our debts." He is on the high road to pardon and recovery. The prodigal's return began when he began to be in want. From that point his face is set towards home. He is now about to come to himself; he will not be long before he comes to his father. Up till now, he was beside himself, *insane*; but here the *insanity* leaves him, and he is himself again. This is a great crisis, an important turning-point in the life of man. Let the sinner once find himself, and he will find God soon afterwards; let him find his sin, and it will not take him long to find pardon; let him begin to grow distressed about his rags, and, before he is aware of it, he is clothed in a robe of righteousness; let him begin to get tired and ashamed of his swinish companions and of his poverty-stricken condition, the chances are, that presently he will be ushered into a grand banquet-hall to partake of a sumptuous

feast in the midst of music and dancing; and there will be joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, and crieth, "Forgive us our debts."

Cardiff.

D. E. THOMAS.

The Crown of Moral Heroes.

"AND THEY THAT BE WISE SHALL SHINE AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FIRMAMENT; AND THEY THAT TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS AS THE STARS FOR EVER AND EVER."—*Dan. xii. 3.*

AS Daniel drew near the close of his wonderful and eventful earthly life, his prospects of the rest and reward of heaven grew wider and clearer. He had been firm and faithful amid many fiery trials and fierce temptations; and he was assured by God that all would be well with him in the end. There would come a time when all the discords of earth would be harmonized, when all the apparent discrepancies of this life would be made clear and plain. A day was coming in which the unrecognised and unrewarded good and faithful servants of the Lord would be crowned and welcomed in the sky. Babylon was renowned for its learning, and the Chaldeans for their astronomical science and skill. Most probably Daniel knew something considerable about the heavenly bodies; He had often,—being a devout astronomer,—looked at the bright calm sunset, had often admired the golden brightness of the azure sky; and at night he had doubtless gazed many a time upon the *starry* sky, and, peering into the star deeps, had been brightened and bettered by the thoughts awakened of calm and peace, of light, and joy; and now he is assured that "they that be wise shall shine," etc.; these words would convey great comfort to the heart of Daniel, and they are calculated to yield consolation to all earnest workers in the great harvest field of the world, to all self-denying religious reformers who are endeavouring to do good in their day and generation. We have brought before us here,—

I. THE NOBLEST CHARACTER AND CONDUCT THAT MAN CAN

EXHIBIT AND EXERCISE UPON EARTH. Wisdom is not the mere accumulation of knowledge, but rather the right application and exercise of it; and the characters here spoken of are those who have the best of knowledge, and who put it to the best of uses. Mere knowledge of science or Scripture may become a curse rather than a blessing to the possessor; it is the good use made of anything that constitutes wisdom. They are the wise (a) *Who are not wholly taken up with the Present*; (b) *Who are not wholly absorbed in the Seen*; (c) *Who are not wholly devoted to Self*; (d) *Who do not think lightly of Sin*; (e) *Who do not ignore the claims of God*. These are the noblest characters exhibited on earth, and their lives are *useful, holy, and happy*. Such men become the instruments of turning many to righteousness. They win souls to the right and true by their (1) *bright example*. Their lives are a perpetual rebuke to evil doers, and they often put to silence wicked and foolish men. A righteous, wisely-conducted life is very eloquent for God and truth, and Christly conduct has frequently brought men to Jesus. The holy lives of renewed men are among the strongest arguments for, and the clearest evidences of, our glorious Christianity. They win by their (2) *weighty precepts*, their tongues speak wisely and warmly, and they become teachers and guides to the ignorant and the bewildered; men are convinced by them and converted, turned into paths of virtue and godliness. They win by their (3) *prevailing prayers*. They speak to men, and they speak to God about men; they seek wisdom of God, who gives liberally and upbraids not; and Heaven smiles upon their endeavours and gives them great success. In spiritual work we can do nothing without God; and to attempt to succeed without Him, without His blessing in answer to prayer, would be exhibiting a folly second only to that of him who says there is no God. Such characters as we have depicted are Heaven's aristocracy—men who, like Daniel, have been persecuted and unappreciated, men of whom the world is not worthy. They die, and their names may not be widely known or long remembered upon earth, but they are welcomed and crowned

above, they shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever.

This leads us to notice,—

II. THE TRUEST GREATNESS AND GLORY THAT MAN CAN ATTAIN TO AND ENJOY IN HEAVEN. The imagery of the text suggests to us, *calmness, security, greatness, elevation, dignity, might*. The stars shine above and beyond the reach of cloud and storm, and from their burning thrones look calmly down upon us. They vary in size and colour, and differ from each other in glory. They shine on and suggest the idea of *permanence*, "for ever and ever." In the future state such calmness, dignity, elevation, security, brightness, and permanence await those who are wise and winning here. They "shall shine as the brightness of the firmament," they shall not be as the dull leaden, or rough rude winter sky, but as the clear bright firmament when the sun is shining on a glorious summer day. All cold mists of doubts and fears gone; all clouds of unbelief dispersed; all storms of passion for ever subsided; all darkness and death gone by; the morn of heaven's day has come, and earth's shadows have for ever fled away! Men have dared and done difficult and desperate things, have endured great hardships to win worldly renown and the applause of men, and have been delighted when rewarded with a medal, a ribbon, or some perishable name. We have held out before our aspiring eyes crowns and thrones that will never crumble nor fade. Such prospects and promises relieve life of its apparent meanness and emptiness. Apart from the greatness and glory to be attained to and enjoyed in heaven, man walks here in a vain show, and all things are vanity and vexation of spirit. Such passages as our text are as windows opened in heaven through which rays of celestial glory come streaming down upon the pathway of the wise and good. We can WORK for God in endeavouring to turn men unto righteousness, and we can afford to *wait* for results, and even endure the ingratitude and unkindness of men, if we may look to such a *compensating* and *culminating* future. By what we say and do, we are holding invisible reins, which are guiding others


to heaven or hell ; and we are paving our own way to darkness and despair for ever, or to where we shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever.

Bristol.

F. W. BROWN.

The Mission of Christ in relation to the Moral Law.

"THINK NOT THAT I AM COME TO DESTROY THE LAW, OR THE PROPHETS : I AM NOT COME TO DESTROY, BUT TO FULFIL."—*Matt. v. 17.*

1.  HE law referred to is not the ceremonial,—that was destined to pass away,—but the moral, which is universal in its obligation and eternal in its duration. 2. The error guarded against: "Think not." Do not suppose it, ye legalists. Do not wish it, ye Antinomians. Christ did not come to destroy the obligation of the moral law, or to exempt us from fulfilling it. 3. The mission declared: "I am come to fulfil. This does not imply any imperfection in the moral law. It is incapable of improvement. The mission of Christ in relation to "the perfect law" is,—

I. TO EXPOUND ITS SPIRITUALITY. The commandments may be broken in the heart, while they are being observed in the conduct. The two tables of stone are resolvable into three laws, the spirituality of which Christ expounds in His sermon. First: The Law of *Love*, v. 21-26, 38-48. This law is violated by—(1) Sinful anger, 21-26. (2) Malicious Revenge, 38-42. (3) Exclusive affection, 43-48. Secondly: The Law of *Purity*, v. 27-32. This law is violated by—(1) Adulterous desire, 27-30. (2) Illegitimate divorce, 31, 32. Thirdly: The Law of *Reverence*, v. 33-37. Reverence for God should make us: (1) Truthful. Do not swear to anything false, 33-36. (2) Believable. Do not swear to anything true, 37. The mission of Christ in relation to the perfect law is:—

II. TO EMBODY ITS PRINCIPLES. The law never had been perfectly embodied by man. The world had never seen the law in a living form. Christ was the perfect man. First:

He was the embodiment of perfect *love*. His love was: (1) Disinterested, (2) Compassionate, (3) Forgiving, (4) Complete — He loved the whole man, (5) Universal — not domestic, nor friendly, nor national, but world-wide, (6) Practical, He gave Himself to evangelistic and philanthropic work and to death, (7) Enduring—unquenched by indifference and hate. Secondly: He was the embodiment of perfect *purity*. "In Him was no sin," (1) He felt none, (2) His friends saw none, (3) His enemies could find none. He was pure internally and externally. Thirdly: He was the embodiment of perfect *reverence*. Mark: (1) His habits of devotion. (a) He had frequent seasons of devotion (b) He had a constant spirit of devotion. He realized the presence of the Father always and everywhere, (2) His habits of speech. How truthful! hence how simple! yet how authoritative! Thus we see in Christ the humanity of the perfect law. It is not transcendental, but practical and practicable. The mission of Christ in relation to the perfect law is:—

III. TO HONOUR ITS BREACH. 1. It had been broken in the practice of man, and He came to atone for it. He is the propitiation for the sins of humanity (Rom. iii. 19-26). He who knew no sin, was made a sin-offering for us (2 Cor. v. 21). He "hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13). These Scriptures do not teach (nor do any other) that the sufferings of Christ were a payment to satisfy the vengeful feeling of God, and purchase pardon for man; but they do teach that they made it consistent for the God of Law to forgive and justify believers.

2. It had been broken in the estimation of man, and He came to show him its glory. He aimed to produce upon our minds and hearts a lasting impression of its divine greatness. He did this by His teachings, which show its spirituality; by His life, which reveals its beauty; and by His death, which impresses its majesty, showing that it cannot be violated with impunity, that penalty must follow sin, that pardon is not its prerogative. The mission of Christ in relation to the perfect law is:—

IV. TO SECURE ITS FULFILMENT (Romans viii. 4). This in two ways: 1. By the presentation of sufficient motive. (1) What motive is sufficient to secure obedience? Not self-interest; not fear; not hope; only love to the lawgiver ruling the heart. "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10). "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous" (1 John v. 3). "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. xi. 30). (2) How does Christ generate this motive? By His love, as seen in the Cross. "The Cross is the condensation of the pardoning grace of the Trinity into an infinite motive, and its presentation to the moral constitution of man, with all the pathos of an invincible appeal. It is the magnetism of Divine love drawing an alienated world to itself." Thus the dominion of sin is abolished (Rom. vi. 14). 2. By the impartation of Divine power. "God worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. ii. 13). Therefore we can work out our own salvation. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. viii. 2). Thus Christ does not, strictly speaking, abrogate old laws and make new ones, but He puts a new lever into man—"writes the law upon our hearts." "He brings out unexpected meanings from ancient enactments, but does not enlarge the statute-book."

Conclusion. This exposition ought to show two things:—

1. That law without Christ is impossible. True conceptions of it are impossible; exemption from its penalty is impossible; obedience to its requirements is impossible. Therefore legalists are fanatics. They are trying to do the impossible. They are pursuing a phantom of their imagination. 2. Christ without law is useless (Gal. ii. 17; Rom. iii. 31). No amount of faith in Christ—of passive reliance on His atonement—can save us if we remain sinners. Therefore Antinomians are fanatics also.

THOMAS BARON.

Prayer.—4. Solidarité in Prayer.

"IS ANY SICK AMONG YOU? LET HIM CALL FOR THE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH; AND LET THEM PRAY OVER HIM, ANOINTING HIM WITH OIL IN THE NAME OF THE LORD: AND THE PRAYER OF FAITH SHALL SAVE THE SICK, AND THE LORD SHALL RAISE HIM UP; AND IF HE HAVE COMMITTED SINS, THEY SHALL BE FORGIVEN HIM."—*James* v. 14, 15.

PECULIAR people of various kinds have tried to interpret this passage. It has from time to time been set before the English public in a very ludicrous and absurd light by some very peculiar practices of some very peculiar people. It is one of the great proof-texts of the Roman Catholic sacrament of "Extreme Unction." And it might be relied upon as giving some authority to the "scientific test of prayer" which formed the subject of my last paper. Amidst this wide diversity of opinion it is somewhat hazardous, and may by some be deemed presumptuous, to suggest another interpretation.

I. It is perfectly clear at the outset that the passage does not refer to miraculous cures wrought by the Apostles. It might indeed be supposed, from the usage of the phrase "anointing with oil" in Mark vi. 13, that something of the same miraculous and exceptional kind was referred to here. But the general context is utterly opposed to such a supposition. The reference is to the ordinary *πρεσβύτεροι*, or elders of the congregation, and not to the Apostles; and, as the Epistle is addressed to the twelve tribes scattered abroad, the passage evidently can have no specific and restricted application to apostolic grace and power. Moreover, the whole context is an enforcement of the duty and efficacy of prayer, and evidently applies to congregations of Christian believers everywhere, and not simply to those in immediate connection with the Apostles. And in these days we may claim this verse as our precious and glorious privilege quite as much as in the days of apostolic power and energy.

II. Nor does the passage give any sanction to the Roman Catholic doctrine of "Extreme Unction," or any like rites and superstitions.

The practice of "Extreme Unction," as a sacrament for the

dying, did not become general in the Romish Church until the ninth century. At first, indeed, the unction was applied, not merely to those who were apparently about to die, but in all cases of sickness, and was often applied by the friends and neighbours of the sick man without any priestly intervention. But eventually the "unction" became recognised and acknowledged as a sacrament, to be administered only by priestly hands, and only in the last extremity. The Council of Trent guarded this priestly prerogative by a fierce anathema, and appealed to this passage of "the blessed James" (*beatus Jacobus*) as the authority for the practice.

Accordingly, the Roman Catholic interpreters restrict the term *τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας* to the official *ordained* elders, refer *σώσει* to the salvation of the soul, and are in very great perplexity over *ἐγρεῖ*.

It is scarcely necessary to expose the fallacies involved in this interpretation. The text manifestly supposes recovery, and not death, and refers not merely to mortal illness, but also to other cases of sickness.

Still less, if possible, does the text give any countenance to priestly confession and absolution. "If he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." Not only shall the Lord, in answer to the prayer of faith, raise the sick man from his illness, and restore his health; but further, if that illness be the result and natural consequence of sins which he has committed, those sins shall be forgiven him. The answer to the prayer shall be full and complete. The recovery shall be thorough, for the illness shall be cured, and the sins which caused it shall be forgiven. The connection between sin and disease is plain and obvious. In many of our Lord's miracles He gave it special prominence. The blessing, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," stands in close contact with the command, "Rise up and walk." And in this passage of St. James the reference is clearly the same.

It is much to be feared that many who deny the letter, retain the spirit of the Roman Catholic rites. Superstitions are strongly vital, and re-appear in strange disguises and in

diverse forms. The baptism of a dying infant for its burial, the administration of the Lord's supper to the dying as a "viaticum," the false systems of confession that still exist—these all breathe the spirit of Romish bondage, and show the need of constant caution and unvarying watchfulness in matters of this kind. Our religion must not degenerate into superstition. We are to be saved by faith in Christ, not by priestly intervention nor by any works or rites whatsoever.

III. The perversions of this passage by the "Peculiar People" are even more glaring than those of the Roman Catholic expositors. The text manifestly indicates prayer by the officers of the Church, together with the use of suitable means for recovery. I do not propose to discuss the exact meaning of *πρεσβύτεροι*. Such discussion would take too long; it rests on other passages of the New Testament, and does not affect the essential meaning of this text, when the assumptions of the Catholic interpretation are removed. It will be in full accord with the text, and sufficient for the subject in hand, to regard the *πρεσβύτεροι* as the official representatives of the Church with which the sick man is connected. These are to be sent for; they are to pray over the sick man (*κάμνοντα*). Modern practice too often reverses this injunction. Most send for the medical man; few for the minister, or representative of the Church. This, even where ardently longed for, is too often left to mere chance report and good feeling. And yet those who do not send, or "call for," often blame the unfortunate official for not coming.

Were nothing said in this passage besides this exhortation to prayer, men would surely never be so foolish as to suppose that no means for recovery were to be used. We pray constantly, "Give us day by day our daily bread;" but that prayer is a mockery, unless we also strive to earn our living. And in all cases God treats us as intelligent creatures. He has given us minds, and expects us to use both minds and hands to do our best to gain the end we pray for. Were there, therefore, no reference whatever in this passage to the use of means for recovery, we should feel compelled, as Christian people, to

use the best human means within our reach to promote the recovery that we seek.*

But we have a reference to means of recovery, and this even if you choose to make the "anointing with oil" a symbolic rite. Anointing with oil was a very common medicament in the East, and is so still (see Isaiah i. 6; Mark vi. 13; Luke x. 34). So that practically this verse explicitly teaches the use of due medical means of recovery. The prime and leading idea of the text, is the efficacy of prayer by the representatives of the Church in cases of sickness. But combined with this is a secondary and subordinate idea in the anointing with oil. The anointing with oil is taken for granted as the usual means of restoration to health, and the injunction here is, that it be done *in the name of the Lord, i.e.,* with a due regard to the fact that only God can bless such means, and really raise up to health again. The writer virtually says, "I know that, as men of common sense and intelligence, you will anoint your patient with oil, and use all necessary means within your knowledge for his recovery. But let this be done in the name of the Lord. He is the Lord of life and health. Let your prayers be made known to Him in earnestness, intelligence, and solemnity. And the Lord shall raise up the sick."

To trust *merely* in human means, however efficient and admirable, is a huge mistake. The prayer saves; God raises up, but He does so by human agency, and the due use of available means.

IV. Advancing now to the idea that James here lends his authority to "the scientific test of prayer," there can be no doubt whatever that this passage is to be considered in connection with the direct teaching of our Lord Himself on the subject of prayer. The 15th verse may be regarded either as a promise or as a statement of future fact; and, whichever of these views

* "The means that Heaven yields must be embraced,
And not neglected; else, if Heaven would
And we will not, Heaven's offer we refuse,
he proffered means of succour and redress."

—*Richard II.*, Act iii. Sc. 2.

be taken, the verse derives its authority from the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. As has been shown in a previous paper, the biblical doctrine of prayer lends no countenance whatever to the scientific test of prayer. The attempt thus to *test* prayer, destroys *prayer*. Instead of faith, it brings presumption; for loyal trust it substitutes defiance. Our Lord Jesus Christ invariably met] defiance and presumption by refusal and rebuke.

Still, it is well to look a little more closely into this scientific objection, because its discussion will bring into notice a most important feature of our text.

If the view of the scientists were correct, a godly man ought to live for ever, and Methuselah might be living now—a *reductio ad absurdum* of their argument. Eternal life, indeed, is promised to the prayerful and believing, but not in this imperfect and unsatisfactory fashion; and no rational Christian, *trusting in the name of Christ*, would ever offer the prayer that he might be restored to health irrespective of the good of mankind and of God's purposes and designs. Mere temporal gifts must always be subordinate to spiritual blessings. St. James in this passage is clearly referring to the highest type of prayer conceivable—the loyal trust of a child of God in his Heavenly Father, the implicit confidence of the believer in his Saviour. Such prayer demands intelligence as well as faith, submission as well as trust. The reference is not to the querulous cry of sickness, but to the devout, earnest, intelligent, and believing prayer of the *προσβύρετοι*.

The question may be asked: To what cases of sickness is this passage to be regarded as applying? A full consideration of the words of the text supplies the answer. It would be an utter absurdity to extend this passage to all cases of illness and indisposition. For a man with a slight toothache or an attack of mumps to gravely summon the elders of the Church to bless by their prayers the tincture or camphorated oil which the physician may advise, would be ridiculous. In such slight ailments, and in many much more grievous ones also, he is fully competent to pray for himself, and need not trouble the

representatives of the Church at all. But there are cases where mental depression, or great physical prostration, or spiritual necessity render needful the help and sympathy of the representatives of the Church. There are times when a Christian man *cannot* pray; there are times when his prayers will be greatly aided by the kindly sympathy of others. Sickness, in many of its forms, is utterly incompatible with the high and energizing type of prayer referred to here; and hence the representatives of the Church must be called in to assist. The connection of sickness with sin in the text, and the whole tenor of the context limit the reference to those cases in which the patient longs for the Christian sympathy of the Church, through its acknowledged representatives, to render vocal his unuttered prayers and quicken his Christian aspirations. Indeed, the very words used to describe the patient imply something of this kind. *κἀμνω* and *ἀσθενέω* both primarily refer to loss of strength, exhaustion, being utterly done-up. In such a condition no one himself can really offer the high-toned prayer referred to, and the representatives of the Church must be called to his assistance that his Christian faith may be strengthened and his recovery assured.

The true teaching of this passage, then, has nothing whatever to do with "the scientific test of prayer." It enforces the *solidarité* of the Christian faith. We are in life and death together; and mutual sympathy and Church life are essential to the highest type of spiritual life. The social instincts and spiritual organization of man are wonderfully co-ordinated to God's ordinances, and God's greatest spiritual blessings come in close connection with avowed and distinctive Church organizations and life.

G. DEANE, D.Sc., B.A., etc.

Spring Hill College, Birmingham.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

The Curse Removed.

(1) Ceremonially.

"CHRIST HATH REDEEMED US FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW, BEING MADE A CURSE FOR US: FOR IT IS WRITTEN, CURSED IS EVERY ONE THAT HANGETH ON A TREE," etc.—*Gal. iii. 13, 14.*

THOSE who hold, propound, and advocate the dogma that Christ was a Legal Substitute for man,—that He literally endured in His own Person all the penalties of the law that man had violated,—use this text as one of the strongest Scriptural proofs in support of their dogma. That it really has nothing to do with it, the following remarks will show:—

I. THAT THE JEWS WERE UNDER A CERTAIN SYSTEM OF LAWS PECULIAR TO THEMSELVES. The word "law" here does not refer to the moral law which rises out of the relationship of the moral creature to God and His universe, and which is binding on all for ever, irrevocable and immutable, but the judicial or ceremonial laws, which were external, local, and temporary,—the Levitical law, as it is called,—and which separated the Jews from the Gentile world. These laws referred to offerings, to circumcision, to ablutions, etc., etc. Both Eadie and Lightfoot thus interpret the word "law" here.

II. THAT THE VIOLATION OF THIS SYSTEM OF LAWS EXPOSED TO TERRIBLE CURSES. What curses are attached to the violation of these laws? See *Lev. xx.*; *Dent. xxvii. 15-26.* And summarily it is said, "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen." Paul tells us in this chapter, "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not," etc. It was a terrible dispensation under which these old Hebrews lived: it was to some extent a "reign of terror." They required those rigorous laws for their discipline; and, as rebellious children, the Great Father had to use the chastising rod. They not only deserved all this, but they required all this; and hence no fault could be found with the Great Ruler of the world. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

III. THAT CHRIST'S SUFFERING ON THE CROSS DELIVERED MAN FROM THIS RIGOROUS DISPENSATION, WITH ALL ITS TERRIBLE PENALTIES. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that

hangeth on a tree."* "Our Lord," says Lightfoot, "had died the death of the worst malefactors. He had undergone that punishment which under the law betokened the curse of God. So far he had become *κατάρα*. But He was in no literal sense *κατάρατος* *ἐν τῷ Θεοῦ*, and St. Paul instinctively omits those words which do not strictly apply, and which, if added, would have required some qualifica-

* The remarks of Dr. Kitto on this passage, taken from Deut. xxii. 22, are worthy of quotation. "Hanging alive is not a Hebrew punishment, and is not mentioned in all the Bible. What our version renders hanging, always means gibbeting, as indeed the context in most cases shows. It was an additional punishment, intended to be in the highest degree degrading, and therefore restricted, as some of the Jews inform us, to the crimes of idolatry and blasphemy: although others say that all who were stoned were also hanged. In the text, Josh. viii. 29, where Joshua is said to have hanged the king of Ai, it must be understood that he had been previously put to death; and in the following chapter (x. 26) where the similar treatment of five kings is mentioned, it is expressly said that they were previously slain. The expression 'He that is hanged is accursed of God,' led the Jews to consider this subsequent punishment as in the highest degree ignominious, and the object of it most abominable. The expression of course does not imply that a man was accursed because he was hanged on a tree (which also means a beam or gallows), but because his crimes had deserved such punishment."

tion." Christ on the tree or the cross, we are told elsewhere, "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, which was contrary to us, taking it out of the way, nailing it to His cross." When He exclaimed, "It is finished," He rang the knell of Judaism; thus rent the veil of the Temple, broke down the partition wall between Jew and Gentile.

IV. THAT CHRIST, HAVING DELIVERED MAN FROM THIS RIGOROUS DISPENSATION, PUTS THE GENTILES ON AN EQUALITY WITH THE JEWS BEFORE GOD. "The law," says Lightfoot, "the great barrier which excluded the Gentiles, is done away in Christ. By its removal the Gentiles are put on a level with the Jews; and thus united, they both gain access through the Spirit to the Father. The sequence of thought here is exactly the same as in Eph. ii. 14-18." "He is our peace who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us."

CONCLUSION.—How thankful should we be for the dispensation under which we live! A dispensation, not of precepts but of principles, not of restraint but of liberty, not of law but of love, not of curses but of benedictions. How great our obligation to Christ!

The Curse Removed.

(2) Morally.

"CHRIST HATH REDEEMED US FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW, BEING MADE A CURSE FOR US: FOR IT IS WRITTEN, CURSED IS EVERY ONE THAT HANGETH ON A TREE."—*Gal. iii. 13.*

IF we take the word "law" here in its *moral* rather than in its *ceremonial* sense, it does not follow that literal substitution is taught; but the following general truths are implied.

I. THAT THERE IS A DIVINE MORAL LAW TO WHICH ALL MEN ARE SUBJECT. What is this law? The principles which are contained in the Decalogue and which were reduced by Christ to two obligations: supreme love to God, and love to our fellow-men. This law, as we have said, rises out of the moral relationship which we sustain in the universe, is written on the moral heart of humanity. (1) *Supreme religious love*. Common reason and common conscience tell all men that the best Being should be loved the most, the kindest Being thanked the most, the greatest Being revered the most. (2) *Magnanimous social love*. We should love our neighbour as ourselves and do unto him as we would have him do unto us. These laws cannot be abrogated or modified. You must blot out all moral intuitions, before you can destroy them. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the

law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another" (*Rom. ii. 14, 15*).

II. THAT DISOBEDIENCE TO THIS MORAL LAW IS FOLLOWED BY A CURSE. "The curse of the law." What is the curse? It involves several things. (1) Loss of *moral harmony*. Remorse of conscience, conflicting passions, etc. (2) Loss of *spiritual freedom*. The whole soul is held in bondage through fear. (3) Loss of *social unity*. Men, instead of loving, are put into antagonism, the social body riven into ever battling forces. (4) Loss of *Divine communion*. Men, instead of being in close and loving alliance with the great Father, are gone like the prodigal into the "far country" of atheism: they are without God in the world. All this, and more, follows the infraction of moral law.

III. THAT ON ACCOUNT OF THIS CURSE, WHICH FOLLOWS MAN'S DISOBEDIENCE, CHRIST SUFFERED. "Being made a curse for us." He could not endure the curse which follows man's disobedience. He did not lose moral harmony, peace of conscience, spiritual freedom. Legal substitution there could not be.

It was human sin or disobedience that brought this curse of suffering upon Him, the sin that nailed Him on the cross. "By wicked hands ye have crucified and slain," etc. It was human sin that brought suffering on His body and upon that soul of His that was "exceedingly sorrowful."

IV. THAT BY REASON OF HIS SUFFERINGS MEN ARE REDEEMED FROM THE CURSE OF DISOBEDIENCE. "Christ hath redeemed us." His sufferings revealed to the world (1) The *terrible evil of sin*. If men would forsake sin, they must hate it; if they would hate it they must see its enormity as displayed in the sufferings of Christ. His sufferings reveal (2) The *moral loveliness of goodness*. Where can men see moral goodness in such calm majesty, attractive loveliness, and transforming power, as on the Cross? It is the influence that goes forth from His Cross, streaming into the thoughts and hearts of men, that will one day redeem universal man from the curse of disobedience. Truly "He puts away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

CONCLUSION. — We recommend our readers to study such articles on the Atonement of Christ as are found in Norris's "Rudiments of Theology," and Mozley's "Sermons."

Great Things in the Material Domain, Emblems of Greater Things in the Spiritual.

"A SOWER WENT OUT TO SOW HIS SEED."—Luke viii. 5.*

THREE of the most valuable things under these heavens are here in this parable, and these three things are used as emblems of realities greater still:—The *soul*, the *truth*, the *teacher*.

Here we have—

I. THE SOIL AS AN EMBLEM OF THE SOUL. The soil, or the "ground" is like the human soul in three respects.

First: *In value*. How inexpressibly valuable is the soil of the earth! All living things, sentient and insentient, vegetable and animal, come out of it and are fed by it. It is at once the mother and nurse of all mundane life. So is the human soul. It contains inexhaustible germs of thoughts. From it spring all governments, all social institutions, all artistic productions, all religions, all books. What endless tribes of life and countless kinds of plants have grown out of the soil, and will yet grow out of it! And what a world of things will yet grow out of the human soul! States, cities, machineries, etc., etc. From

* For explanation of this parable, see "Genius of the Gospel," seventh thousand, p. 223.

it the millennium will one day come. The soil of the earth is like the human soul,—

Secondly: In its *capacity*. The soil has the capacity of receiving, germinating, unfolding, and perfecting the seed that is put into it. As the soil can thus take in and develop the seed, the human soul can take in and develop the word of God. It is the distinguishing glory of man, that he can receive and develop the words of the Infinite Mind. The soil of the earth is like the human soul,—

Thirdly: In its *variety*. The parable shows that the soils of the earth vary. There is the hardened soil, the superficial soil, the thorny soil, and the good growing soil. Men's souls differ widely. Some are unimpressible, others are tender, some are shallow, others are profound, some are corrupted, worthless, others are pure. Some are barren, others are fertile. No two souls are exactly alike. They range from the imbecility of an idiot to the capabilities of a Bacon or a Shakspeare.

Here we have—

II. THE SEED AS AN EMBLEM OF THE TRUTH. The seed is like the truth,—

First: In its *vitality*. In the seed, under the dry husk, there is a germ capable of indefinite development. In every truth there is life. The seed is like the truth,—

Secondly: In its *completeness*. Each seed is perfect in itself. You can add nothing to it, you can take nothing from it. To tamper with it, is to kill it. Divine truth is complete in itself; it admits of no improvement, it is perfect in its own simplicity. The seed is like the truth,—

Thirdly: In its *multiplying power*. From one seed millions may spring. One grain, in the course of ages, will cover a continent.

Grain, within grain, in endless numbers dwell,
And boundless harvests slumber in a shell."

It is so with truth. One truth gives birth to millions. The seed is like the truth,—

Fourthly: In its *infinite worth*. In the seed is the life of the world, and truth is the life of souls; it is the "bread of life," it is, "the water of life" etc. Here we have—

III. THE SOWER AS AN EMBLEM OF THE TEACHER. "A sower went forth to sow." The sower is necessary to give value both to the soil and to the seed. Of what service would the soil be, if there was no seed? Of what service the seed, if there was no soil in which to deposit it? Of all material agencies in the human world, there is no agency so important as that of the sower, the man who puts the seed into the soil. Of all the spiritual agencies

in the world, none equal to that of the true teacher; the man who is indoctrinating the minds of his contemporaries with the great ideas of God. Christ was the great Sower. He scattered the seed during three years of His public ministry; and He scatters the seed now by all His true ministers—He scatters it by their conversation, by their writings, by their example, by their discourses. Oh, come the day when the sower shall tread every field, every island, every continent of the globe, and scatter the incorruptible seed over all the zones of human life!

Warning against a Dangerous Fling.

"CAST NOT AWAY, THEREFORE, YOUR CONFIDENCE, WHICH HATH GREAT RECOMPENSE OF REWARD."—*Heb. x. 35.*

IMPERFECT and degenerate as man is, the human mind cannot rest with confidence and complacency on vague or erroneous theories. Glance at the heathen world—Socrates utterly perplexed, Cicero, etc.

I. Christian confidence: its NATURE.

1. The word indicates deep conviction; firm, intelligent persuasion. It is not an outgrowth of natural agencies, but a spiritually implanted principle, arising out of the saving apprehension of Divine truth.

2. It is made vigorous and

abiding by a personal experience of the blessings of salvation.

The need of this experience the Apostle urged upon them here. Such are the influences of grace, that the vision of faith cannot be satisfactory and clear till we have felt the renewing energies of the Holy Ghost.

3. It is an abiding expectation of all the help and grace that God has promised to His people.

4. It is a hope of immortality. It "enters within the veil." It anchors the Christian, and he rides safely on the angry sea.

II. Christian confidence: its VALUE.

"Great recompense of reward." The expression is peculiar and forcible.

1. It carries with it that basis of all true happiness: the consciousness of our acceptance with God. This is the foundation of the superstructure of grace in the heart, the grand remedy for the guilt and tyranny of sin. It carries unequivocal evidence. "The Spirit itself beareth witness." Power of sin broken, accusations of conscience cease. "Being justified by faith, we have peace."

2. It opens to the mind unfailing sources of spiritual knowledge. Discoveries of the mind in a state of indecision are opinions only.

not settled truth. Many of them tend rather to annoy than satisfy the soul; but let the soul once be satisfied of its acceptance with God, and, etc.

3. It stimulates to heroic effort in the attainment of spiritual good, to suffer as well as to do the will of God.

4. It brings an earnest of future bliss. Cheered by the glorious prospect, "we rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

5. But what are these mere foretastes of joy, to that heavenly rapture that shall burst upon the soul

"When faith in sight is swallowed up,

And prayer in endless praise"?

III. Christian confidence: the APOSTLE'S EXHORTATION respecting it. "Cast not away, therefore, your confidence."

The Church had been invaded by unprincipled and erroneous teachers. Paul says, "Cast not away;" (1) because of their erroneous doctrines; (2) because of worldly advantage or pleasure; (3) because of trials and afflictions; (4) because of the unfaithfulness of others.

1. I urge this duty upon you as Christians, "Cast not away."

2. My unconverted friends, I exhort you by the value of this confidence, to secure it without delay.

THOS. KELLY.

Albany, N.Y.

Notes on the Apostles' Creed.—7. "Was Crucified."

"JESUS CHRIST . . . EVIDENTLY . . . CRUCIFIED."—*Gal. iii. 1.*

In our course of meditations I chose these words, not to bring before us the Saviour's death, but those pains and that shame of crucifixion which were the continuation and climax of the sufferings He endured under Pontius Pilate, and which led up to His actual death. We are reminded of (1) The openness of His anguish. Suffering naturally seeks secrecy. Other sufferers have found solace in silence, and consolation in being watched by none but the eyes of love. But as an aggravation of His sufferings, and as an augmentation of their influence, Christ suffers openly. These things were not done in a corner. So the Cross of Christ is the centre of Christendom. The river of life flows from under this altar of sacrifice. (2) The intense anguish He endured. We can almost measure it, and weigh it. And there is no cry of reproach, no opiate, no angel help. (3) The bitter shame of His passion. The gallows, and the gallows between convicted criminals. Thus the finger of the world's scorn is pointed at Him; its hiss of contempt is cast at Him; the world's insult and obloquy broke over Him in its fiercest storm.

Thus He took upon Him the shamefulfulness as well as the sorrow of sin. All this illustrates—

- I. THE TRAGEDY OF THE WORLD'S GUILT. Such treatment to such a One is simply the catastrophe of a fearful tragedy. For there is here
 (1) Ingratitude to the Kindest.
 (2) Insult to the Holiest.
 (3) Cruelty to the Tenderest.
 (4) Hatred to the Best.

II. THE SACRIFICE OF LOVE.

There is the sacrifice (1) Of human love. The Man Christ Jesus so loved that He gave Himself thus for the world; for foes as well as friends. (2) Of Divine love. A clear and glorious handwriting on the Cross is, "God SO loved the world." In those sacrifices is the outlet of the Divine emotion.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

IMMORTALITY.—The majestic theme of our immortality allures, yet baffles us. No fleshly implement of logic or cunning tact of brain can reach to the solution. That secret lies in a tissueless realm whereof no nerve can report beforehand. We must wait a little. Soon we shall grope and guess no more, but grasp and know. Meanwhile shall we not be magnanimous to forgive and help, diligent to study and achieve, trustful and content to abide the invisible issue? In some happier age when the human race shall have forgotten in philanthropic ministries and spiritual worship the bigotries and dissensions of sentiment and thought, they may recover, in its all-embracing unity, the garment of truth which God made originally "seamless as the firmament," now for so long a time torn in shreds by hating schismatics. Oh, when shall we learn that a loving pity, a filial faith, a patient modesty, best become us and fit the facts of our state? The pedantic sciolist, babbling of his clear explanations of the mysteries of life, suggests the image of a monkey, seated on the summit of the starry sphere of night, chattering with glee over the awful prospect of infinitude. What ordinary tongue shall dare to vociferate egotistic dogmatisms where an inspired Apostle whispers with reverential reserve, "We see through a glass darkly"? There are three things, said an old monkish chronicler, that make me sad: First, that I know I must die; second, that I know not when; third, that I am ignorant where I shall then be.

Est primum durum quod scio me moriturum ;

Secundum, timeo quia hoc nescio quando ;

Hinc tertium, flebo quod nescio ubi manebo.

Man is the lonely and sublime Columbus of the Creation, who, wandering on this Spanish strand of time, sees drifted waifs and strange portents borne far from an unknown somewhere, causing him to believe in another world. Comes not death as a ship to bear him thither? According as hope rests in heaven, fear shudders at hell, or doubt faces the dark transition, the future life is a sweet reliance, a terrible certainty, or a pathetic perhaps. But living in the present, in the humble and loving discharge of its duties, our souls harmonized with its conditions though aspiring beyond them, why should we ever despair or be troubled over-much? Have we not eternity in our thought, infinitude in our view, and God for our Guide?—W. Alger.

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts! and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths of the most vital interest and universal application.

Micah calls himself a Morasthite because he was a native of Morashothgath, a small town of Judea. He prophesied in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah, and his prophetic mission commenced soon after that of Isaiah. He was contemporary with him as well as with Hosea and Amos. His prophecies were directed to Samaria, the capital city of Israel, also to Jerusalem. Hence we find denunciations against Samaria mingled with prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem. One of his predictions, it seems, saved the life of Jeremiah, who would have been put to death for foretelling the destruction of the Temple, had not Micah foretold the same thing one hundred years before.

The book is commonly distributed into three sections: chaps. i. and ii., chaps. iii. to v., chaps. vi. and vii. Each of these opens with a summons to hear God's message, and then proceeds with expostulations and threatenings, which are succeeded by glorious promises.

His style is bold, fiery, and abrupt, and has not a little of the poetic grandeur of Isaiah. His sudden transitions from one subject to another often make his writings difficult to decipher.

MICAH.

No. CCLIV.

The Incomparableness of God illustrated in His Forgiveness of Sin.—i. The Nature of His Forgiveness.

"WHO IS A GOD LIKE UNTO THEE, THAT PARDONETH INIQUITY, AND PASSETH BY THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE REMNANT OF HIS HERITAGE?"—*Micah* vii. 18.

THE prophet here,—anticipating the full deliverance, not only of the Jews from Babylonian captivity, but probably humanity itself from the curse of sin through Jesus Christ,—breaks forth in a sublime strain of praise and admiration in relation to the *incomparable* cha-

racter of God. "Who is a God like unto Thee?" The subject of the two verses is *Divine forgiveness*, its *nature*, its *source*, and its *completeness*. We shall confine ourselves now to the *nature* of Divine forgiveness. God's forgiveness here is represented in the words, He "passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage." This does not mean that God is unobservant of sin, for all things are naked and open unto Him, nor that it is not an offence to Him, for it is "an abomination in His sight." But that He regards it in no fault-finding spirit, but with a noble generosity. As loving parents are disposed to overlook much in their children of which they

cannot approve, the Great Father is disposed to overlook much. "He is not strict to mark iniquity." He passes it by, pursues His benevolent march as if it did not exist. Theology, which has thrown a haze over many of the bright things of revelation, has clouded this, one of its most glorious orbs. Forgetting that the Bible is a popular book, using language in accommodation to our habits of thought and expression, it has constructed its theories upon the etymology of words. The truth and pertinence of this remark will be seen if, at the outset, we consider the very diversified forms in which the Bible represents to us the doctrine of Divine forgiveness. Generally, indeed, I find it set forth under figures corresponding to the aspects in which sin stands before the mind of the writer at the time. For example,—

I. When sin appears as a DEBT, an unfulfilled obligation, then pardon is spoken of as a CANCELLING. Thus, in the 43rd chapter of Isaiah, Jehovah is represented as saying, "I, even I, am He who blotteth out thy transgressions"; and Peter, on the day of Pentecost, exhorts his vast auditory to "repent, that their sins may be blotted out." When a man has paid his debts, or when some one else has discharged them, the creditor takes his pen in hand and strikes from the ledger both the name of the debtor and the amount. But sin is a debt in a very figurative sense, and therefore such representations of pardon must not be taken in a literal meaning.

II. When sin appears as an

ESTRANGEMENT from God, then forgiveness is represented as RECONCILIATION. But as the estrangement is not mutual, it being exclusively on man's part, in the reconciliation there is no mutual change of mind. God *cannot* change, and *need* not change, to be reconciled to the sinner.

III. When sin appears as an INDICTMENT, forgiveness is spoken of as a JUSTIFICATION. But justification can in the nature of the case have but a very remote resemblance to the forensic term as used by men. In civil justification, for instance, the charge has been found false, the accused demands justification as a *right*, and retires from the court with a high sense of insulted innocence.

IV. When sin appears as a POLLUTION, forgiveness is represented as a CLEANSING. Hence we read of Christ's blood cleansing from all sin. But it is only in a very figurative sense that you can employ the word washing to mind, which is an invisible and impalpable substance.

V. When sin appears as a DISEASE, forgiveness is represented as a HEALING. "I will heal your backsliding." "I am come to bind up the broken hearted."

VI. When sin appears as an OBSTRUCTION between the soul and God, forgiveness is represented as a CLEARING. The mountains are levelled, the clouds are dispersed, the foes are crushed and are buried as Pharaoh and his host were buried in the depths of the sea.

There are three points of contrast between Divine forgiveness and human:—

First: *In human Governments forgiveness is exercised with most cautious limitations.* Human sovereigns, however generous their natures, can only bestow pardon on a few out of numerous criminals. Were forgiveness to become general, the power of the Government to maintain order would be weakened. There is no such limitation to the exercise of this prerogative in God. He offers pardon to *all*.

Secondly: *In human forgiveness there is no guarantee against future criminality.* The prisoner pardoned by a human sovereign, may be inspired by gratitude and prompted perhaps to resolve upon a life of future obedience, and yet his heart remain unchanged. The principles that led to his crime may still be in him, and, being there, they may break forth again. But in Divine forgiveness it is not so. The pardoned man is a changed man: he has a new heart put within him, a heart inspired with such love to the Sovereign as will secure a joyous and constant obedience.

Thirdly: *Human forgiveness can never put the criminal in such a good position as he had before his transgression.* He has his freedom as before, but he has not his self-respect, he has not the same standing in society; his contemporaries will never look upon him in the same light again. Some will shun him, others will suspect him, and few will venture to give him their confidence and their love. But in Divine forgiveness the criminal is raised to a higher status even than that of innocence. I know not whether the angels would have

been his servants, had he never fallen; but after his forgiveness they become so. They rejoice with him on his conversion, they cheer him on his pilgrimage, they bear him on their pinions to their heavenly scenes. He is brought into an "innumerable company of angels." I know not what relations man would have entered into with his Maker, had he never sinned; but I know that he never would have had what the pardoned sinner has—the honour of seeing his Maker, in the person of Jesus, on the throne of the universe, gazed on by every eye and worshipped by every heart.

No. CCLV.

The Incomparableness of God illustrated in His Forgiveness of Sin.—2. The Source of His Forgiveness.

"HE RETAINETH NOT HIS ANGER FOR EVER, BECAUSE HE DELIGHTETH IN MERCY."—*Micah* vii. 18.

ANGER in God is not passion, but principle; not antagonism to existence, but to the evils that curse existence. His anger is but love excited against everything that tends to disturb the harmony, cloud the brightness, and injure the happiness of His creation. "Fury is not in me," etc.

Here is the source of forgiveness, "He delighteth in mercy."

I. FORGIVENESS IS A MERCIFUL act. It is not an act of equity, but of compassion; not of justice, but of love. It is the prerogative of mercy. "The Lord passed by before him and proclaimed,

The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Again, "The Lord is longsuffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression." It is mercy that cancels the debt, blots out the cloud, effects the reconciliation, cleanses the stain, and heals the disease. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done," etc. All the redeemed in heaven acknowledge this. "Unto Him that loved us and washed [loosed] us from our sins in His own blood," etc.

II. THIS ACT OF MERCY IS THE DELIGHT OF GOD. "He delighteth in mercy." Mercy is a modification of benevolence. It always implies misery, for if there were no misery there would be no mercy. Whilst God does not delight in misery, He delights in removing it. What greater delight has a loving parent than in restoring to health and vigour a diseased and suffering child? The delight of moral restoration to a true soul is even greater than this. A noble father has perhaps more delight in the virtues and the fellowship of the son whom he has been the means of raising from moral depravity to spiritual purity and power, than in those of the one who has always pursued the virtuous way. It is thus with Him from whom all human love proceeds, He delights in mercy. Will not the song of the redeemed have more music in His ear than the lofty strains of those who have never fallen? He delights to welcome to His

bosom and His home His returning prodigals.

First: *If He delights in mercy, then hush for ever the pulpits that blasphemously represent Him as malign.*

The God that you have in the Calvinian theology, is not the God of the Bible, but the God of ill-natured, morose, and vindictive souls. Hence the masses of England turn away in horror from some modern pulpits. "He delighteth in mercy." Let us declare this! "Let the wicked forsake his way," etc. "Come, let us reason together," etc. "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden," etc.

Secondly: *If He delights in mercy, then let no sinner despair on account of the enormity of his sins.* Let all the sins of the word be embodied in one man's life; let that one man return to God, and He will "abundantly pardon" him. He will do it, not reluctantly, not half-heartedly, but with aboundings of joy. He will rejoice over you. "There is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth," etc.

Thirdly: *If He delights in mercy, may we not hope that one day there will come an end to all the misery of the moral universe?* "He retaineth not His anger for ever." Who shall say but in some distant future every discord in the moral universe shall be hushed, every prison opened, all sufferers delivered, and all hells quenched? What generous heart would not a thousand times rather believe in this if they could, than in Eternal torment or utter extinction?

No. CCLVI.

The Incomparableness of God illustrated in His Forgiveness of Sin.—3. The Completeness of His Forgiveness.

"HE WILL TURN AGAIN, HE WILL HAVE COMPASSION UPON US; HE WILL SUBDUCE OUR INIQUITIES; AND THOU WILT CAST ALL THEIR SINS INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA."—*Micah vii. 19.*

THE reference is here, perhaps, to the destruction of Pharaoh and his host. "He will destroy their sins as He destroyed them, and buried them in the depths of the sea" (Exod. xv. 11).

Two things are implied:—

I. The entire SUBJUGATION OF ALL SINS. "Sin," says Henderson "must ever be regarded as hostile to man. It is not only contrary to his interests, but it powerfully opposes and combats the moral principles of his nature and the higher principles implanted by grace; and, but for the counteracting energy of Divine influence, must prove victorious. Without the subjugation of evil propensities, pardon would not be a blessing. If the idolatrous and rebellious disposition of the Jews had not been subdued during their stay in Babylon, they would not have been restored." Sin is the enemy of all enemies. If it is in us, it sets the holy happy heavens against us. Take it from us, and hell becomes our minister for good. This He subdues. In truth, Divine forgiveness is the destruction of sin in us, nothing else. It is not something outside, it is all within. Another thing implied is:—

II. The entire SUBMERSION OF

all Sin. "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." Forgiveness is deliverance from sin. How strong is the imagery employed in the Bible to represent the completeness of this deliverance! It is as the "blotting out of a thick cloud." See that dark mass of cloud up yonder, how it hides the sun and chills the air. A breeze has sprung up, and it is gone—the sky is azure, the scene is bright, and the flowing air warm with life. That cloud shall never come again, no more shall thy sins. It is as the throwing of them behind God. "Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back." Who knows where the back of God is? I see His face in nature. His smiles are the beauty of the world. I see His face in Jesus—"the brightness of His glory." But where is His back? It is the fathomless abyss of nothingness. It is a separation as far as the east from the west. Tell me the distance from the east to the west, and I will tell you the distance which the pardoned sinner is from sin. It is a casting them into the "depths of the sea." Not on the shore, to be washed by the incoming waves, but into the "depths." Into the abysses of some mighty Atlantic, where no storms shall stir them up, no trump shall wake them from their graves. "In those days, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and shall not be found." But where are they buried? In the forgetfulness of infinite love. "I will remember their sin no more." Can Infinite Intelligence forget? Yes, and His forgetfulness is one of the radiant attributes

of His character. Does not all true forgiveness involve forgetfulness? Those who say they forgive and cannot forget, lack the faculty of forgiveness: as yet, Heaven has not endowed them with the power of granting absolution. It is of the very nature of love to hide injuries. Charity covereth sins. God has the power of forgetting injuries, because He is LOVE. I see the power of love in hiding injuries, working everywhere in nature. The sea hastes to cover up the wounds which ruthless ships have ploughed into its noble bosom. The tree, bleeding with the sores which the woodman has inflicted, loses no time in its efforts to conceal the marks of violence it has received. Day by day goes on, until the year comes round, when, amidst its luxurious foliage you look in vain for the old scars. And thus, as the

waves of the sea and the flowing sap, love ever works. It hastes to cover up from the eye of memory the injuries it has received. How soon the love of a wife buries in forgetfulness any injuries she has received from the man she loves too well. The countless pains which the thoughtlessness and waywardness of children in their early days inflict upon the parental heart, are soon buried in the sea of parental love. Love digs in the heart of parents a grave for the wrongs, and builds a museum for the virtues of their children. All this is of God, God-like. Infinite love "passeth by the transgression." He leaves it behind Him as He proceeds, in the majesty of His goodness, to diffuse wider and wider for ever the blessedness of His own being.

Biblical Criticism.

Proper Names formed from the Names of Heathen Deities.

(Continued from page 297.)



AMONG the civil officers of David enumerated in 1 Chron. xxvii., one, who had charge of the olive and sycamore trees, was named Baal-hanan. He is said to have been a Gederite, that is, a native or inhabitant of Geder, one of the royal cities of the Canaanites. But, as nothing is known of him, and we have no other hint as to his parentage or extraction, no reasonable conjecture can be formed to account for his possession of a name which certainly has the same meaning with that of the king of Edom mentioned in Gen. xxxvi. 29, and with that of the Carthaginian Hannibal, and implies a belief in the existence and action of Baal as a divine or spiritual being.

Other names of heathen deities are found in the composition of Assyrian and Chaldean proper names recorded in the later portions of the Old Testament history. Adrammelech, the name of one of the two sons of the Assyrian king Sennacherib, by whom he was murdered, is also the name of one of the gods of Sepharvaim, a Chaldean town or region. The word means, "splendour or glory of the king." One of the princes of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, present at the taking of Jerusalem, is called Nergal-sharezer; and Nergal is the name of the tutelar deity of the Cuthites, a Mesopotamian people, from whom the same king brought settlers to colonize Samaria. The signification of the idol's name, as well as of the word joined with it in the proper name, is uncertain; but as *ner* means "light," the deity worshipped under this title was probably the sun, or the dawn, or fire. Sharazer is the name of the second of the parricidal sons of Sennacherib. It is also the name of an Israelite mentioned in the Book of the Prophet Zechariah (chap. vii. 2), and is accounted for as belonging to an Israelite by the fact that he must have been born during the seventy years captivity, and, like Daniel and his three companions, received a Babylonish name. Very probably Nergal formed part of these names, as in the former in which it is expressed. Its suppression in the last instance may readily be explained by the aversion of the returned captives to idolatry, and consequently the indisposition of any one of them to retain as part of his own name that of a heathen god. The idol Nebo is mentioned by the prophet Isaiah, in connection with Bel, as one of the principal objects of Babylonish worship, "Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth;" and Nebo, as well as Bel or Baal, forms a portion of various royal and princely names conspicuous in Chaldean history. The most important example is Nebuchadnezzar, the conqueror and enslaver of Judæa. Among his princes or generals we find Nebu-shasban, Samgar-nebo, and Nebu-zaradan, captain of his guard (Jer. xxxix. 3, 13). And we learn from various historians that his father's name was Nabo-polasser, and that one of his predecessors in the kingdom of Babylon

was Nabo-nassar, who is also called Beleses, and is, on good grounds, identified with Baladan, the father of Merodach Beladan, mentioned by Isaiah. The word Nebo is the name of a mountain east of Judæa, from which Moses surveyed the promised land before his death. It probably means "height," and, used as the name of a deity, would correspond to the word *al*, "high," or *Elyôn*, "most high," applied to the true God. The termination, variously written *ezzar*, *ezer*, *asar*, or *assar*, which is found in several of these names, is undoubtedly a word denoting high office or station, and is generally rendered as "prince." The name of the great king Nebuchadnezzar is interpreted by some to mean "Nebo, prince of gods," or "prince of Nebo the god."

Some instances have already been given of Greek names compounded of the word for God, or of the names of some particular deities. The use of such names was common among the Greeks. The names of nearly all the gods which they worshipped may be found in the composition of proper names. But far the greatest number of names thus composed is made up of the words *Theos*, the general term for God, and *Dios*, an inflexional form of the name of the greatest God, known as Zeus, or more familiarly to most under his Roman appellation, Jupiter. The readers of Grecian history will remember how often names beginning with *Theo* or *Dio*, or ending with *theus* (*Theos*) occur. Of the names of other deities we have some examples in Greek names belonging to persons mentioned in the New Testament, as Apollos, an abbreviation of Apollonius, "belonging to Apollo;" Phœbe, an actual name of the goddess Artemis, or Diana; Hermes, the name of the god called by the Romans Mercury; Nereus, the name of a sea-god; Hymenæus, "belonging to the god of marriage, Hymen;" Dionysius, "belonging to Dionysus, or Bacchus;" Diotrophes, "nourished or cherished by Zeus;" Demetrius, "belonging to the goddess Demeter, or Ceres."

It has been observed that some of these heathen names express sentiments with regard to the Divine Being, or some imaginary tutelar deity, identical with those which are con-

tained in certain Hebrew names. But the number of names significant of the attributes of God, or of feelings of veneration or gratitude or devotion toward Him, or any usurper of His titles, among the Greeks and other heathen nations, is very small compared with the number of such names among the people of Israel. Nor is it in number only that names of this class exhibit their superiority. The ideas and sentiments of which God is the object, involved in the greater portion of the heathen names, are very meagre in character and limited in their range, contrasting remarkably with the fulness, richness, extent, and variety of the conceptions of God, and of His relations and dealings with man, presented in the long list of Hebrew names compounded with the words *El* and *Jah*. Excluding all fanciful or even doubtful etymologies, and all mystical interpretations,—such, for example, as profess to discover the mystery of the Divine nature and the characteristic truths of the Gospel in Old Testament names,—there remains in these names a mass of statements and propositions concerning God, His attributes, His will, His works and ways, from which we might, independently of any other sources of information, attain to a full understanding of the religion, both doctrinal and practical, of the people among whom they were in use. It would not be difficult to extract from them a theology, a creed, a rule of life, and a liturgy. And the representation thus afforded of the character of God, and of the views and feelings of His worshippers, would commend itself to any mind as a religion in the highest degree sublime and pure, and infinitely superior as a system of belief and of moral and spiritual sentiments, to any other religion actually in practice among ancient nations, or existing theoretically in their writings. Moreover, the religion, the principles and doctrines of which can be ascertained, and could be exhibited in theological form and order by means of Israelitish names, will be found to coincide perfectly with the religion which is dogmatically and historically presented to us in the records which contain these names. As has been shown in various instances, and might be shown in numerous others, the ex-

pression of the idea concisely and mystically signified in a name, is identical with some important declaration of Divine truth, or of man's duty or relation towards God, found in the Hebrew Scriptures, in the Law, or the Prophets, or the Psalms. This coincidence is a valuable testimony in favour of the credibility of these records, as the literature of a people possessing a religion different from any other that existed in the world during the whole course of their national history, and claiming to be the religion originally taught to man by his Creator; for no one will attempt to account for this remarkable agreement by the supposition that the names were invented to support the statements of facts, and of religious truth and opinion, found in the various documents of the Hebrew literature. If, then, they do support them, there was such a religion, so made known, so established, so received, as the books represent it to have been. Hence, also, they corroborate the character which the Jewish people, and the writers of the New Testament, ascribe to these books as a revelation. The names themselves were not a revelation, given in detail to the persons who imposed or assumed them. But they imply knowledge and information on divine and sacred subjects, possessed in common by their authors, which could only be obtained by them from what they at least recognized as a revelation. Now, the books embody all such knowledge and information as were necessary for the origination of the names, and without which they could not have existed. They are therefore fairly entitled to be considered as the acknowledged revelation, or the records of the revelation, on which the names depend. But the chief value of the class of Old Testament names does not consist in the evidence which they afford of the historical truth of the narrative in which they occur, or of the reality of the profession and practice of the religion which the books of the Old Testament teach. The study of them is rather to be recommended as presenting testimonies and examples of personal and domestic piety, as it existed in the ancient Church of God, proofs of the oneness of the Spirit which

dwells in the hearts of true believers in every age, and as supplying us with the means of placing ourselves in spiritual sympathy with many a one whose experience has been like our own, but whose time of trial has long since passed away, and who now "through faith and patience inherit the promises." It is true that among those who bore and those who gave such names, there were some whose characters were the very opposite to those of believers and saints. But these, we may be well assured, were not the originators of the names. Passing beyond these to the persons to whom the names were in the first instance due,—knowing, as we do, from the usages and character of the Israelitish people, that the signification of a name was indicative of some real fact or feeling,—we clearly recognize in these persons the possessors of faith and hope, of trust and love, which had the same object as our own,—a personal God, the One, only, eternal, infinite Jehovah, made known to us by the historic facts of His personal manifestation, and apprehended by our intellect and affections through the special grace of His indwelling Spirit. Thus, as in so many other ways open to us by means of the Divine word of the Old Testament Scripture, there is established between the present and the distant,—even the most remotely distant,—past, a true communion of saints, available for our encouragement and instruction in righteousness, especially useful for the purposes of inward and searching self-examination, and tending to stimulate, by example and comparison, our growth in grace and our progress towards the attainment of spirituality and nearness to God in heart, life, and character.

W. F. WILKINSON, M.A.

("Personal Names of the Bible.")

GREAT IDEAS.—Great ideas have a power to close up the senses. St. Paul's clock might strike its loudest boom into the ear of the man who is busy in the realm of abstraction; and he would hear it no more than the dead that sleep beneath its majestic dome. You cannot always get great men to eat, drink, speak, and live by your chronometers.

The Preacher's Emblematory Helps.

ANCIENT MYTHS; THEIR MORAL MEANINGS.

Books of Reference: Max Müller's "Lectures on Comparative Mythology." Hardy's "Manual of Buddhism." Pritchard's "Analysis of Egyptian Mythology." Coxe's "Mythology of the Aryan Nations." Coxe's "Tales of Ancient Greece." Gladstone's "Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age." Farrar's "Critical History of Free Thought." Keary's "Heroes of Asgard." Canon Kingsley's "Sermons." Ruskin's "Queen of the Air." Sir T. Malory's "Morte d'Arthur." "Bacon's Essays." "Murray's Manual of Mythology."

"Shall we sneer and laugh at all these dreams as mere follies of the heathen? If we do so, we shall not show the spirit of God or the mind of Christ, nor shall we show our knowledge of the Bible."—*Canon Kingsley.*

No. XI.

Ares, or Mars: The War Spirit.

THIS god, who was a son of Zeus, was originally regarded as the storm-god; but this conception of him was soon lost, and he stood to Greek and afterwards to Roman thought as exclusively "the god of turmoil in human affairs," as "the god of dreadful war," of "wild confusion and strife of battle." He is to be clearly distinguished from other deities who had more or less to do with human battles; for while his sister Eris calls forth war, and Athene represents the thoughtfulness that gives skill in military manœuvres and in all the affairs that lead to and arise out of war, Ares loves it for its own sake, is the personification of mere force, and, with the very appetite of a destroyer, gloats in the bloodiest battles. "He exhibits," says Mr. Gladstone, "that idea of Deity which both rises above man and sinks below him: in point of strength, Divine; in point of mind and heart, simply animal." It was of little importance to him which side

won; he had not even party spirit, but sometimes assisted one and sometimes the other, on account of which his father Zeus called him "The Turncoat." His watchword was, not "Right," but simply "Strife"; and his satisfaction was found in din and roar of battle-fields, devastation of towns, overthrow of empires. The only sacrifices for which he thirsted were those of human blood. He had some honour from the Greeks; but was not worshipped by them as a protecting deity, as he was, under the conception of Mars, by the Romans. His worshippers held the wolf and the woodpecker,—destructive beast and destructive bird,—as sacred to him. Though thus restless for strife, he was by no means always successful in it; for when he comes into conflict with higher powers he is utterly worsted. When, in the Trojan wars, Athene assists Diomed against him, Ares falls with a thundering crash to the ground, roaring like ten thousand warriors. And when caught in lustful intercourse with Aphrodite, he is captured in a cunning net and brought, an object of ridicule and feebleness, to

judgment. And indeed he is made contemptible by Athene, who drags him back from one of his revengeful sallies, strips off his armour, and replaces him in his seat, scolding him severely, as was her habit towards him. He was conquered, moreover, by the gigantic Alcidæ and kept a prisoner for more than a year; and also by Hercules, who drove him back ingloriously to Olympus.

Such a myth personifies the still prevalent War-spirit, and illustrates such facts concerning it as,—

I. IT IS A PERVERSION OF SOMETHING BETTER THAN ITSELF. As much nobler as Zeus, the father was, than Ares, the son, as much grander as was the storm-god than the god of mere human slaughter, so much nobler and grander is the true spirit of conflict than that of physical war. Conflict there must be in a universe where there exist Right and Wrong, Truth and Error. The lethargy of carelessness, the cowardice of feebleness, belong to mean souls. Antagonism to every form of evil is the instinct of the true, is an inspiration from God. In destroying all forms of error, the spirit of despotism, the germs and sap of selfishness, Wordsworth rightly sings—

“Slaughter is God's daughter.”

But the Holiest Book has taught us, let who will gainsay it, that the weapons of true warfare are not carnal, as were those of Ares, and as are those of soldiery to-day; but spiritual, like Milton's, and Socrates', and Paul's, and the Lord Jesus Christ's.

II. IT IS INSEPARABLY RELATED TO MANY EVILS. The lecherousness of Ares but hints at the glaring fact that the War-spirit lets loose men's lowest passions. Violation and rapine follow the heels of battle, while unchastity commonly dwells in the ranks of those who give themselves up to martial life. No very strong or subtle net would be needed to catch Ares and Aphrodite in the purlieus of barracks and camps. The resort to physical force in conflict, is such a tacit acknowledgment of the superiority of body over mind, that it is no wonder that those whose life-habits lead them to that conviction believe in the superiority of animal over mental pleasures, and, in their enjoyments as well as in their conflicts, subordinate the moral to the physical.

III. IT IS OF NECESSITY MARKED BY CRUELTY. The deeds of Ares are all harsh and rough and bloody. And though it must be acknowledged that into some wars chivalry has been called, and that care for the wounded, kindness to the dying, compassion for the bereaved, have distinguished some conquering battalions, so that there is not always the letting loose as of the devilry of pandemonium, yet, at its best, war is cruel. To tear human flesh, to maim human limbs, to quench human life, to break human hearts, both indicates and begets a hardness of spirit that claims kinship with the savage and sanguinary Ares, not with the meek, and lowly, and gentle, and benign Jesus.

IV. IT IS RESTLESS FOR AC-

TIVITY AND MAKES OPPORTUNITIES FOR ITSELF. It was a keen knowledge of his nature that led Greek poetry to portray Ares as not caring which side he took, so long as he could embroil men in quarrels, nations in war, and satiate himself in the horrid orgies of the battle-field. He is nothing if not fighting. His spear is inseparable from him, his symbol is a sword, to which horses and cattle and men are sacrificed. It is so with the War-spirit. It fosters hereditary enmities between nations; it sows in the scars of old battles the seed for fresh harvests of slaughter; it awakens perpetual panics; it appeals now to the lust of despotism, and now to the yearning for liberty; now to the populace, and now to the ruler; now to the thirst for aggression, and now to the instinct of self-defence. It matters not to whom or by what means; but it must have some opportunities for the development of its deadly desires, the activity of its brutal resources.

V. IT IS NOT INVINCIBLE, BUT CAN BE OVERCOME BY HIGHER

POWERS THAN ITSELF. Though he stalked about in defiance of all, and in his huge powers could overcome many, Ares was conquered again and again. So the victories of war are neither complete nor lasting. Not complete, for physical force cannot touch prejudice, conviction, conscience; not lasting, for time effaces many of the results, and one war often wipes out the effects of preceding ones. Moreover, intrigue, or arbitration, or the growing convictions of a people, are stronger than war. And true religion is. It shall break the bow and the battle-axe; it shall transform the sword into a ploughshare, and the spear into a pruning hook. The religion of Christ shall, by bringing in a reign of brotherhood, and by teaching the sanctity of human life, go on conquering the War-spirit,—

“Till the war drum throbs no longer, and the battle flag is furled

In the parliament of man: the federation of the world.”

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

Man's Heart.

WHEREVER the heart is, the man is: he lives in the object on which his affections are set; it is his sphere, his world; it binds his energies and being; beyond it he cannot take a step. What a small soul-world, therefore has the man whose treasures are *earthly*! It has no scope for the play of the spirit-

ual powers; it lacks the elements and influences necessary to his growth and health. The soil is sterile, the air is insalubrious, the little encircling firmament is dark with dust and smoke. The air of mammon infuses poison into the spiritual powers. The man who lives in this world, must from the necessity of the case, *lose his soul*. On

the other hand, what a magnificent world does *his* spirit live in whose treasures are in heaven! Here are an immeasurable scope and an exhaustless nourishment for every faculty: it stretches into the infinite,—“Its air is charged with ever-renewing life; its heavens are lit with ever-brightening suns.”

Prayer.

PRAYER is the necessary condition of spiritual development. Physical exercise is necessary to develop our physical powers, intellectual exercise is necessary to develop our intellectual powers; and religious exercise, the exercise of prayer and praise, is *indispensable* to develop our spiritual powers. As the earth can only send out her germs of life into blade and flower and fruit as she turns her face to the sun, so the soul can only send out its spiritual energies into perfection as it turns itself in prayer to the eternal fountain of life and light.

Injudicious Administering of Holy Thoughts.

THERE are “dogs” and “swine.” The former represent men of a sour, malignant, and snarlish spirit, who, instead of listening to your counsels, will bark at you with the rage of a virulent depravity. The latter represent men of the grossest materialism, immersed in sensuality, whose hearts are made fat, who are moral swine. All your arguments will fall on them as flakes of snow on the flinty rock; they will make no

impression. Such characters are to be found, undoubtedly, within the circle of every man's observation. Who does not know of some character whom he feels it would be foolish, if not perilous, to counsel about religion? There is not only a time for the good to speak, but a *class* to speak to. Jesus would not speak to some, not even in answer to their appeals. It is a solemn thought, that there are men on earth who have passed the reach of moral influence, and whose day of probation is already past.

Prayer raises us above the World.

PRAYERLESS souls are the creatures of the world; they are as clay in its plastic hands, as feathers amidst its shifting winds, as straws upon its flowing streams. Prayer lifts them from degradation, gives them the pinions of an eagle to battle with tempests, penetrate clouds, and bask in calm and sunny scenes above. The spirits of holy martyrs have risen from beneath all the antagonistic forces of the world, and sang triumphantly as they soared heavenward on the wing of prayer. In prayer, man fills his mind with the idea of God, and in the idea of God all earthly glories pale their light, and the universe itself seems to fade into a shadow. We link ourselves to Omnipotence, and grow defiant of all other forces in prayer.

The Progress of the Soul is ever Accelerative.

THE longer the soul continues to move in the line either of

goodness or evil, the more momentum it gathers, and the faster it proceeds. Its progress is not like the progress of the planets or the ocean. The stars do not seem to move quicker now than they did in the days of Adam; nor does the ocean ebb or flow with greater speed. But the progress of the soul in character, is something like the progress

of the cascade, it gathers fresh momentum every moment. Hence, a bad man will perpetrate deeds of iniquity to-day, the bare idea of which would have overwhelmed him a short time ago; and hence, too, a good man will perform now, with ease and happiness, deeds of self-sacrifice which, at the outset of his religious life, he would not venture to attempt.

SCIENTIFIC FACTS AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

"Books of Illustration" designed to help preachers, are somewhat, we think, too abounding. They are often made up to a great extent of anecdotes from the sentimental side of life, and not always having a healthful influence or historic foundation. We find that preachers and hearers are getting tired of such. Albeit illustrations are needed by every speaker who would interest the people, and are sanctioned by the highest authority. Nature itself is a parable. Hence we have arranged with a naturalist who has been engaged in scientific investigation for many years, to supply the *Humiliat* with such reliable and well-ascertained facts in nature as cultured and conscientious men may use with confidence, as mirrors of morals and diagrams of doctrines.

The Kite: Unexpected Enemies.

THE flight of the kite is singularly graceful and easy. The extended wings seem to have the power of supporting their owner in the air almost without the least exertion: it glides smoothly along without effort, now rising gently, now descending, to use the words of Buffon, "as if sliding upon an inclined plane." Now wheeling round in graceful circles, and all with scarcely a perceptible movement of the wings, but simply by the action of the rudder-like tail. It seems all occupied with the sky. During his graceful evolutions, however, the kite has his eyes steadily fixed upon the ground beneath him, with which he seems to have so little to do; and the moment his prey makes its appearance, in the shape of a

mole, a mouse, a young rabbit a leveret, or any other small terrestrial animal, the long wings are closed in an instant, and the kite descends with astonishing velocity upon his surprised and unsuspecting enemy.

How often our enemy is found to be the person who appeared to be ignorant of even our existence—one fully occupied with objects far away, and totally engrossed in nobler things.

The Elephant: A Strong Man's Deportment.

As the elephant is conscious of its own strength, it takes every precaution so that its heavy mass may not harm creatures that are weaker than itself. If it passes through a crowd, it opens a passage for itself with its trunk, and gently pressing

forward its fore limbs in such a manner as to hurt no one.

A really capable man is always considerate of those about him. He does not with fussy weakness push people in all directions, regardless of injuries, as does the weak, ambitious man. He does not, like a serpent, sting those who oppose him, nor does he bark at them like a dog. He calmly moves them out of his path. In the exhibition of his power and in his regard for others his tact resembles that of the elephant.

The Ant-lion: The Crafty Rogue.

THE Ant-lion (*Myrmeleo formicarius*) is an elegant insect, resembling the dragon-fly, and is found in the environs of Paris. Its larvæ are met with in great abundance in sandy places very much exposed to the heat of the sun. There they construct for themselves a sort of funnel in the sand, by describing backwards, the turns of a spiral whose diameter gradually di-

minishes. Their strong square head serves them as a spade with which to throw the sand far away. They then hide themselves at the bottom of the hole, their head alone being put out, and wait with patience for some insect to come near. Scarcely has the ant-lion perceived its victim on the borders of its funnel when it throws at it a shower of dust, to alarm it and make it fall to the bottom of the precipice, which does not fail to happen. Then it seizes it with its sharp mandibles and sucks its blood; after which it throws its empty skin out of the hole and resumes the lookout.

That crafty rogue, who, either in the character of a cunning director of bubble companies, or in that of a jobbing promoter of impossible undertakings, or in that of a plausible tricky attorney, gives himself up to the work of entrapping his fellow-men, that he may ruin them for his own benefit, is similar to this elegant ant-lion.

Homiletical Breviaries.

No. CCLVIII.

Devil Worship.

"THEY SACRIFICED UNTO DEVILS."—Deut. xxxii. 17.

OUR subject shall be "*devil worship*;" and this worship has ever been the most popular worship in all lands and times. Let us notice a few of the devils that men sacrifice to. I. There is the devil of SENSUALITY. The worship of sensuality includes intemperance, debauchery, and the gratification of all the lower animal appetites. Is not this devil worshipped? Do not men everywhere

sacrifice intellect, genius, time, money, health, and even life itself, at its infernal shrine? II. There is the devil of **AVARICE**. Greed of gain, desire for wealth, is the inspiration of millions in this mercenary age. It is the "devil that worketh in the children of disobedience." What sacrifices are made to this devil, this mammon! Truth, honesty, conscience, self-respect, moral freedom, peace, and honour, are all sacrificed to this grim deity. III. There is the devil of **VANITY**. The love of show, desire for popular applause. To be grand, attractive, admired. This is the abounding inspiration. And what sacrifices are made to this devil, this love of show? Fortunes are sacrificed to this devil. IV. There is the devil of **SECTARIANISM**. The religious element has become so perverted, so corrupted, that it is made to work in sects, by sects, and for sects. A greater devil than religious sectarianism can scarcely be found. And in the religious world, so-called, men are constantly sacrificing to this devil,—sacrificing truth, charity, moral nobleness.

No. CCLIX.

The Favoured Peoples of the Earth.

"UNDERSTAND THEREFORE, THAT THE LORD THY GOD GIVETH THEE NOT THIS GOOD LAND TO POSSESS IT FOR THY RIGHTEOUSNESS; FOR THOU ART A STIFFNECKED PEOPLE."—*Deut. ix. 6.*

THE JEWS were a favoured people in many respects. But every nation has its favoured people. There are favoured peoples in all communities—persons specially favoured by their healthful constitutions, their vigorous intellect, their lofty genius, their high culture, worldly wealth, and genius. Three remarks are suggested concerning those favoured people: I. That whatever favours distinguish one class of men from another in society, they ARE THE GIFTS OF GOD. "The Lord thy God giveth thee." Canaan was the gift of God. And so it is, that whatever a man has that gives him an advantage over others, is the gift of God. It is not the result of chance, nor the reward of his own industry. This should teach us—First: Not to be proud of our superiorities. What have we that we have not received? Secondly: To thank God for our superiorities. Thirdly: To bless men by our superiorities. Whatever we have, of which others are deprived, should be employed to the benefit of mankind. It is suggested—II. That these distinguished gifts are bestowed,

not on the ground of any SPECIAL MORAL EXCELLENCE. "The Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people." There was nothing in the character of the Jews morally superior to the people of other lands and tribes. Indeed, they seemed to be pre-eminently splenetic, dissatisfied, grovelling, ungrateful, rebellious people. Why, then, was this land given to them? Simply because God so willed it. The gift must be traced to His sovereignty. So it is ever. Whatever the favoured people of any community have, giving them an advantage over others, comes to them as the free gifts of God. It is not because they are morally better than others; they may be, and often are, morally worse. Why did Bacon have his philosophic power, or Byron his poetic genius, or Rothschild his wealth, premiers their influence, emperors their dominions, or primates their ecclesiastic rule and wealth? Not because of their "righteousness." III. That the fact that they are not bestowed on the ground of moral superiority SHOULD BE WELL UNDERSTOOD BY MEN. "Understand therefore." First: *Understand it, that you may not deceive yourself.* Let no man conclude, because he is prosperous, that he is the favoured of Heaven. Secondly: *Understand it that you may realize your responsibility.* "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."

No. CCLX.

Genuine Religious Teaching.

"MY DOCTRINE SHALL DROP AS THE RAIN, MY SPEECH SHALL DISTIL AS THE DEW, AS THE SMALL RAIN UPON THE TENDER HERB, AND AS THE SHOWERS UPON THE GRASS."—Deut. xxxii. 2.

THIS verse may be fairly taken as representing "genuine religious teaching." Genuine religious teaching—I. IS GENTLE. It is not noisy, not the rush of the cataract, or the roar of the thunder. It descends on the soul gently as the dew and the small rain. A sower may just as well endeavour to scatter his seed in the whirlwind, as a man to indoctrinate human souls with the great ideas of God by roaring declamation. "Christ did not lift up His voice in the street," etc. The great religious teachers of all ages have been quiet religious talkers. Genuine religious teaching—II. IS PENETRATING. "My speech shall distil." Just as the rain and the dew go down quietly to the roots and administer nourish-

ment to every fibre, so genuine religious teaching goes down through the intellect into the conscience and the heart. We have heard sermons so quietly delivered, yet so full of devout spiritual thought, that they have penetrated the very centre of our natures. Genuine religious teaching—III. IS REFRESHING. Religious truth is as "rain upon the new-mown grass." "As the rain watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud," so spiritual truth descends with quickening influence into the soul.

My Ministry at Stockwell.

(Continued from page 318.)



SKETCH of my ministry at Stockwell would be very incomplete were I to omit all reference to an enterprise which I originated, and which engrossed much of my time and faculties for many anxious years. I allude to what is known as "*The Dial*" newspaper.

Upwards of twenty years ago, newspapers, mob-orators, political partisans, and bigoted religionists, agitated this country for a war with Russia in defence of Turkey. Turkey was held up as "the sick and dying man," Russia as the tyrant torturing him, trying to bring round his dissolution in order to take possession of Constantinople, and have free scope for its fleets on the Bosphorus. At this moment, as I write, the same type of men, agencies, and interests are at work, strange to say, to blot Turkey out of existence, and thus help the tyrant against whom well-nigh all England at that time rose up with burning passion to destroy. Most humiliating and painful indeed are these popular agitations to those who know how they are got up and promoted. It is evident to men of ordinary intelligence and experience in public life how, for example, all the popular excitement in connection with "Bulgarian atrocities" has been originated. There is the newspaper interest. It is a lamentable fact, that so morbid is the public mind, that the more tragic and prurient the circumstances the penny journal records in its columns, the higher will its circulation rise, and consequently the fuller become the coffers of the proprietors. Hence, for weeks they will fill their columns with all the loathsome details connected with such cases as that of the murderer Wainwright, and Bravo the self-destroyer. Verily those journals reap a rich harvest

out of those "atrocities" as they are called. In connection with this, there are always a goodly number of men in all the villages and towns of the kingdom, ministers of the Gospel, alas! as well as others, whose vanity and garrulousness are so strong that they are ever ready to step on the platform and make their voices heard. No music so sweet to their ears as the boisterous cheers of the thoughtless crowd. In addition to all, there are party politicians who hail such opportunities out of which to build up a political capital. How can we explain the fact that such a man as Gladstone, who led the nation into the Crimean War,—the greatest crime ever perpetrated as well as the greatest political blunder, by which half a million of men were sent into eternity,—should now be active in his endeavours to excite the public mind against Turkey? How has the pro-Turk become a pro-Russian? * It is easy to make eloquent speeches on these atrocities; a man would be less than a man not to burn with compassion for the victims, and with indignation towards their torturers and destroyers. But are there not atrocities at home? Albeit, can there be war without atrocities? Did *we* commit no atrocities in the Crimean War, and in our numerous wars in the East? The journal, the speaker, or the statesman who denounces these atrocities and defends war, is guilty of such an inconsistency as to forfeit all claim to our confidence, both in his honesty and in his logic.

As one who, when at college, became deeply convinced of the anti-Christianity and the inexpediency of war, I did my utmost to oppose the agitation in favour of the Crimean campaign. I wrote against it, I preached against it, I got up public meetings against it, and I incurred not a little censure on account of my opposition. I stood pretty well alone in my neighbourhood. All the newspapers of the day were for war. *The Times* went with all its mighty force of satire and argument against my strongest views and feelings on the subject; and there was no organ of equal authority to represent and advocate the convictions of those who agreed with me. There were little sect journals; but their influence on the nation was as nothing. There were only a few "Dailies," and some of them were dying—none of them had a circulation or a name that gave them much influence. Penny daily newspapers had no existence then; the *Times* had no competitor; it was an absolute autocrat in the realm of journalism. The necessity for another truly national journal deeply impressed

* See *The Times* of to-day, October 10th.

me on that occasion; and out of the deep necessity grew the conception of *The Dial* plan. The scheme I wrote down at the time in a hypothetical form ran thus:—

Suppose the following expedient:—Suppose that some 20,000 honest-hearted, free-minded, and progressive men, from all classes of the community—from all Churches and from no Church,—merchants, lawyers, ministers, statesmen, shopkeepers,—banded together by mutual financial interests and mutual sympathy with a common work. Suppose that work be to create a daily journal, not to advocate religious dogmas, but to test all events and questions by that golden rule which meets with a deep response in the conscience of every man: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." Suppose that the aggregate capital obtained by these 20,000 be abundantly sufficient to employ more correspondents in every part of the world than any other paper in existence, and to have a literary staff of unequalled intellectual power and genius; suppose that this paper, in every respect, is equal, if not superior, to the *best* journal in the land, and that rectitude shall characterize its every column; suppose all this, and you have a most certain method of improving our newspaper press. Every man of business will see that a paper started on such conditions could not possibly fail. In the first place, you have capital sufficient for every purpose, and you have also in the combination a sufficient number of advertisers and readers to support the paper. Each of the 20,000, if he sees a paper at all, would see this, for two reasons: (1) Because it is supposed to promote his principles; (2) because, by supporting it, he is increasing his percentage on his own investment. It is his paper. And in the second place, the fact that it started from these 20,000 men would give it a prestige and a power which would carry it into all circles of society, and cause it to be regarded here, as well as in other parts of Europe and America, as emphatically the national organ. Statesmen and merchants may ignore your little denominational papers, but they could not ignore a paper representing such a combination of men; nay, they would feel bound to see such a paper, to form a correct judgment of the feeling of the country. They would regard it as the best pulse by which to test the nation's health—*The Dial* to point out the hour reached in the true moral, as well as material, civilization of the world.*

After this, I drew up a prospectus, of which the following

* See my article on "Journalism and the Pulpit," *Homilist*, Series I., vol. vi., page 73.

is a copy; and I give it in full, in order that my readers may see the purpose I had in view, and the spirit that animated me in the undertaking.

"The newspaper press has become the greatest power in the State; it has a voice in every question, and mingles with every interest; it acts upon the springs of the world, influences every wheel in the complicated machinery of national life, determines the fates of cabinets, and models public sentiment. Under a profound impression of the fearful magnitude of this power, and a deepening conviction that it is far from being used as, by a combination of earnest and loving men, it should and might be, the "National Newspaper League" has resolved upon starting a daily paper which shall be the organ, not of intriguing expediency and temporizing policy, but of righteous principle; not of cabinets and dynasties, but of the people and nationalities. *The Dial*, adopting for its guide the maxim that 'righteousness exalteth a nation,' will estimate and discuss all questions, social, political, and ecclesiastical, not in the spirit of class, party, or sect, but according to truth and fact, in the light of equal justice, unswerving honesty, and Christian ethics; the energies of its contributors being devoted especially to the following principal objects:—

"The diffusion of sound education and intelligence, the promotion of the arts and sciences, and the encouragement of a healthy literature.

"The preservation to the people of their full right of self-government, and the obtaining for all classes a just and complete representation in Parliament and a fair participation in the administration of national affairs; so that capacity and merit may form the only titles to office, and the public business of the country may be transacted by competent men receiving a reasonable remuneration for effective services.

"Retrenchment in all parts of the public expenditure.

"The fostering a moral tone of feeling among the people in relation to all public questions, and impressing upon them the necessity of bringing conscience to the hustings and carefully discharging their duties as well as energetically upholding their rights. An administrative reform must come out of a parliamentary, and a true parliamentary reform must grow out of a social and a moral regeneration of the people. The promotion of the rights of conscience and of Protestant Christianity throughout the world.

"The amendment of the law, with a view especially to the more expeditious administration of justice.

The advocacy of national temperance, sanitary reform, and

an enlightened observance of the weekly day of rest, as vitally important to the physical, social, and political as well as the moral and religious well-being of the individual and the State.

"The bringing our foreign relations into conformity with sound common-sense principles, and obtaining for the public a full knowledge of diplomatic negotiations, and the recognition of arbitration as, whenever practicable, the means best becoming Christians of deciding political disputes.

"*The Dial* will pay special attention to the markets and exchanges of the world; and, by the establishment of the most effective agencies, will, it is expected, become authoritative and complete as a vehicle of commercial intelligence.

"*The Dial* will procure for its readers, at first hand, constant and trustworthy information, less of diplomatic intrigues and Court gossip, than of the life and doings, the social condition, industrial, scientific, artistic, literary, and religious activity of the leading nations of the world. Mutual and well-timed aid and real and lasting peace are to be guaranteed rather by the acquaintance and friendship of the peoples with each other than by the *entente cordiale* of courts or diplomatists.

"*The Dial*, starting with an unprecedented capital, will be able at the outset to engage a literary staff, the first in talent, attainments, earnest conviction, and world-wide sympathy the age can produce; whose endeavour it will be to make the conviction universal that what is morally wrong cannot be politically right. Especial attention will be devoted to the ethics of the questions and events of the day.

"*The Dial* newspaper will afford to public men who may be tried and condemned elsewhere, a court of appeal as wide in its influence and authoritative in its decisions as the mightiest newspaper tribunal in existence, thus providing for a deeply-felt want of the nation, and securing fair play for the people.

"As regards the question of profit, investment in the shares of this Company may be briefly recommended on these grounds:—

"(1) The Directors, having resolved rather not to start at all than commence with an inadequate capital, and the data for accurate calculations of the required capital being easily accessible, all risk or loss, even to the *limited* extent possible under the present Act, is avoided. (2) It is obvious that the large body of shareholders will secure an immense constituency throughout the United Kingdom, which will insure an unparalleled circulation of the newspaper, and hence large dividends.

"But even were the scheme not recommended by commercial advantages as great and so evident, the Directors of the 'Na-

tional Newspaper League Company, Limited,' would hope speedily to obtain the requisite capital, as they have the utmost confidence that every true patriot and philanthropist will, in the critical circumstances of the age, see it to be his duty to aid by word and deed in creating an organ thoroughly and powerfully expressive of sentiments truly national, and that hundreds of thousands will, on the principle of sympathy as well as proprietorship, be ready to hail its first appearance."

After encountering many difficulties, and much anxious and arduous labour, I succeeded in getting the Company organized, the deed of settlement completed, and the Company registered under the Joint-Stock Company's Act, 1856. The shares were £10, and a deposit of £2 per share. When the Company was thus fully registered, the question was, how to get the 20,000 shareholders required. I was a member of the Milton Club, Ludgate Hill, where I met from week to week numbers of ministers and laymen of the Independent denomination. In talking to them I could scarcely get a man to believe in its feasibility. Most of them pronounced it a wild dream of Utopia, and said that no shareholders could be obtained.

Agents were appointed to canvass for shareholders; but they returned without success. As I had a strong faith in it, I felt bound to do what I never contemplated, and which involved me in enormous labour,—go out and attend meetings. I did so, and everywhere succeeded. I obtained as Directors such men as John Moss, Esq., Solicitor, Mayor of Derby; Rev. Canon Erskine Clark, Rector of Battersea; Edmond Beales, M.A., now County Court Judge for Cambridge; Rev. Gerald Blunt, Incumbent of Crewe, Cheshire; Rev. William Webster, M.A., King's College; Dr. John Kennedy, Stepney Green; J. S. Glennie, Esq., M.A., etc., etc. T. B. Simpson, Esq., Parliamentary Solicitor, joined me at the outset, entered heartily into its spirit and its purpose, and attended many meetings in various parts of the country. He was an able man, a capital speaker, and rendered great service to the undertaking in its first stages. The numerous meetings which I attended in various parts of the country are recorded in *The Dial Register*, a periodical which the Company started in order to defend itself from the slanderous attacks of newspapers, whose selfish fears got awakened. In that journal will be found a list of shareholders obtained at every meeting. Thus I went on until 10,000 shareholders were obtained and £240,000 nominal capital was subscribed. In my next article I will detail some of the difficulties I met with, and the circumstances that brought the movement to its end.

(To be continued.)

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

REASONS FOR RENOUNCING INFIDELITY: TWO SERMONS PREACHED IN THE AUGUSTINE INDEPENDENT CHURCH, CLAPHAM, ON SEPT. 10TH, 1876, BY GEORGE SEXTON, LL.D. London: G. S. Sexton, 75, Fleet Street.

These are two remarkable discourses by a remarkable man. The Author is well known as a man of letters and high scientific attainments. He is not only a vigorous and independent thinker, but an able author and an eloquent speaker. In his preface he says concerning himself:—"For more than twenty years, as is tolerably well known, I occupied a conspicuous position in the ranks of the so-called Freethinkers. About five years ago, I was led, by a course of Providential circumstances, to reconsider the whole question of Christian evidences, which I had so long been accustomed to look upon as closed as far as I was concerned; and the result was, the discovery of the utter fallacy of my sceptical views. Gradually I returned,—as far as the broad principles of Christian truth were concerned,—to the faith of my early life, and finally to the position with which I commenced my public career—that of a preacher of the glad tidings of salvation through Christ."

The discourses themselves are of a high order of thought and expression; they are in no sense manufactured sermons, mere pulpit compositions. They are not the mere ideas or speculations of the Author,—they are his burning convictions, convictions which he has reached by a long and terrible experience, and the public proclamation of which has cost him no small amount of painful sacrifice. The second of these discourses we heard delivered, and seldom were we more interested, intellectually satisfied, and morally excited. Dr. Sexton, who is yet in the prime of life, has, we have no doubt, a bright career before him. We should be sorry to hear that he had settled down as the pastor of any Church. Such a man is wanted by all the Churches, to quicken the pulse of thought and swell the tide of holy sentiment. To some of us ministers in London pressing invitations are constantly coming from our brethren in the country, urging us to preach anniversary sermons; and many of them we are bound to decline. We know of no man in England who would more effectively supply such services than Dr. Sexton.

"HE THAT OVERCOMETH." A NOVEL IN TWO VOLUMES. By FANNY ATKIN-KORTWRIGHT. London: Remington & Co., 5, Arundel Street, Strand.

The preface indicates the character of this work. "The kind reader is begged to take this tale as it is meant to be, no ambitious attempt at a novel, only a simple story of homely lives. One point of interest attached to the narrative is, that its plan was suggested to the writer, some ten years ago, by her generous adviser and encourager, the late Bulwer Lytton."

Although we are not great readers of fictitious literature, and regard the great bulk of what are called novels, under which our railway book-stalls groan, as a disgrace to our intelligence and morality, we are by no means opposed to the principle of works drawn from the imagination. The principle is Scriptural, and can be and has been used with enormous advantage in exposing follies and iniquities, and inculcating lessons of practical wisdom and righteousness. The work before us we have read with intense interest. It is written with a good purpose, in a vigorous style, and in a pure and dignified spirit. Its appeals are not to the animal in human nature, but to the intellectual and the moral. It is free from all the pruriences that give popularity to most modern novels. It is clean and cleansing throughout. The authoress, who reveals the higher instincts of womanhood, is gifted with a keen insight into the hidden springs of character, a fertile fancy, a forceful intellect, and a fascinating pen. We congratulate her on this most able production, and shall be ready to welcome her other works.

LITTLE FOLKS. A MAGAZINE FOR THE YOUNG. NEW AND ENLARGED SERIES. London: Cassell, Petter & Galpin, Ludgate Hill.

It is scarcely possible to conceive of any work more adapted to charm, instruct, strengthen, and ennoble the mind of a child than this book. It abounds with short articles on birds, beasts, fishes, and men. It has stories and poems, riddles and puzzles in abundance. Every page has pictures to illustrate the articles, some of them most striking. A beautiful present for young people this.

OUTLINES OF BIBLICAL THEOLOGY. By JOHN ELSTOB. Second Edition. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

We noticed the first edition of this theological synopsis. It is now a little enlarged, re-written, and thus improved. To Sunday School teachers and local preachers we commend it with confidence and affection.

THE SMALLEST CHURCH SERVICE IN THE WORLD. London: Henry Frowde, 7, Paternoster Row.

This is an artistic gem. Would that all eyes were good, and that all books were like this: we could then carry our libraries in our pockets, and thus save rooms.



The Leading Homily.

THE SUCCESSFUL DISCIPLINE OF LIFE.

"HE IS CHASTENED ALSO WITH PAIN UPON HIS BED, AND THE MULTITUDE OF HIS BONES WITH STRONG PAIN : SO THAT HIS LIFE ABHORRETH BREAD, AND HIS SOUL DAINTY MEAT. HIS FLESH IS CONSUMED AWAY, THAT IT CANNOT BE SEEN ; AND HIS BONES THAT WERE NOT SEEN STICK OUT. YEA, HIS SOUL DRAWETH NEAR UNTO THE GRAVE, AND HIS LIFE TO THE DESTROYERS. IF THERE BE A MESSENGER WITH HIM, AN INTERPRETER, ONE AMONG A THOUSAND, TO SHOW UNTO MAN HIS UPRIGHTNESS : THEN HE IS GRACIOUS UNTO HIM, AND SAITH, DELIVER HIM FROM GOING DOWN TO THE PIT : I HAVE FOUND A RANSOM. HIS FLESH SHALL BE FRESHER THAN A CHILD'S : HE SHALL RETURN TO THE DAYS OF HIS YOUTH : HE SHALL PRAY UNTO GOD, AND HE WILL BE FAVOURABLE UNTO HIM : AND HE SHALL SEE HIS FACE WITH JOY : FOR HE WILL RENDER UNTO MAN HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. HE LOOKETH UPON MEN, AND IF ANY SAY, I HAVE SINNED, AND PERVERTED THAT WHICH WAS RIGHT, AND IT PROFITED ME NOT ; HE WILL DELIVER HIS SOUL FROM GOING INTO THE PIT, AND HIS LIFE SHALL SEE THE LIGHT. LO, ALL THESE THINGS WORKETH GOD OFTENTIMES WITH MAN, TO BRING BACK HIS SOUL FROM THE PIT, TO BE ENLIGHTENED WITH THE LIGHT OF THE LIVING. MARK WELL, O JOB, HEarken UNTO ME : HOLD THY PEACE, AND I WILL SPEAK. IF THOU HAST ANYTHING TO SAY, ANSWER ME : SPEAK, FOR I DESIRE TO JUSTIFY THEE. IF NOT, HEarken UNTO ME : HOLD THY PEACE, AND I SHALL TEACH THEE WISDOM."—*Job xxxiii. 19-33.**

AS the knell of another year peals its doleful chimes into our souls, strange and solemn problems concerning life rise within us. What is this life—so changeful, so fleeting, beating every hour with restless impulses, heavily charged with anxious thoughts, painful memories, and sad forebodings ; appearing for a short time like waves that beat on the shore or meteors that rush athwart the heavens ? Some treat life as a battle-field where men, tribes, and nations are to try their strength and to gratify their greed, ambition, and revenge. Some as a market, where

* For Exegetical Remarks on this passage, see page 414.

the chief work is to buy, and sell, and get gain. Some as a scene of mere animal pleasure, in which the appetites are to be pampered and the lower passions are to revel in sensual indulgence. But such views of life are derogatory to the Creator and repugnant alike to reason and to conscience. The truest idea of life, perhaps, is that it is a *School*—a scene of intellectual and moral discipline; a scene where the Great Father seeks to make His human creatures meet for the “inheritance of the saints in light.” Life is a Moral School.

Now, the subject we draw from the text is, the *successful discipline of life*. Millions pass through the school of life undisciplined and unimproved. Instead of having their moral errors corrected, their sympathies purified, their spiritual faculties quickened and developed, they get morally hardened and carnalized. The text leads us to remark three things concerning the *successful* discipline of life:—

I. IT OFTEN INVOLVES GREAT SUFFERING. “He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain: so that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat. His flesh is consumed away that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.” Here Elihu, although by no means an infallible teacher, presents a most graphic, touching, and impressive picture of the man who has to pass *successfully* through this school. “He is chastened also with pain upon his bed.” Where repose and re-invigoration are sought, he finds through his sufferings only restlessness and exhaustion. “His life abhorreth bread.” His sufferings have stolen away his appetite so that he loathes that which is necessary to the sustenance of his existence. He is reduced to a skeleton. “His flesh is consumed away that it cannot be seen.” The fires of pain have consumed his flesh and made bare his ribs. He is brought “near unto the grave.” Such is the physical suffering that has often to be endured in this school, if the discipline is to be successful.

The amount of human suffering, which is confessedly enor-

mous, is used by the infidel to prove that God is not love, as the Bible teaches. It were absurd to expect that an intellect like man's, limited and infirm, could reconcile all the sufferings of the world with the benevolence of the Creator. But if the physical sufferings of men aid their spiritual culture—what are they but blessings in disguise? * And this they do, not, of course, against their consent; but the fault is theirs if they consent not. Philosophy as well as piety recognizes and proclaims the doctrine that "affliction worketh good." Resulting, as it ever does, from the infraction of laws, it warns the criminal and rouses his intellect to the study of the system under which he lives, in order to put himself in harmony therewith. It is the rod of nature chastising its wayward and rebellious child. Vice is often checked by it, and by it virtue is frequently developed. Physical evils are spiritual blessings. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Affliction does the good man service in many ways. It detaches him from society, and makes him feel his own solemn loneliness. It impresses him with the worthlessness of materialism, and with the awful solemnity of the spiritual world. It brings the idea of death, retribution, eternity, powerfully near to the heart. It is the cutting that makes the diamond sparkle; the crushing that makes the aromatic plant emit its fragrance; the dashing billows that polish the pebbles on the shore; the shaking of the torch that brightens its flame. Affliction is like the winter frost, it kills the pernicious insects which the sun of health has engendered. It acts like the stormy wind upon the tree; it strengthens the fibres and deepens the roots of our virtue. It is like the thunderstorm in nature, it purifies the unhealthy atmosphere that has gathered round the heart. It is the bitter potion which the

* For remarks on this, see *Homilist*, Series I., vol. ii., page 297.

skilful physician administers to his patient. "As threshing separates the corn from the chaff," says Bruton, "so does affliction purify virtue." "Virtue," says Lord Bacon, "is like precious odours, most fragrant when they are incensed and crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue."

It is the sufferer that retires to Bethesda, turns from earth to heaven, from the natural to the super-natural, and, with an anxious eye and a throbbing heart, waits the visits of the descending angel. Evil is evil, but evil is not an end. Good is the end, and evil is ever rushing to it like the thousand streams to the ocean world. The evils of this world, like the furious storm that spreads devastation over sea and land, will one day die away in a clear sky and a pure atmosphere, and leave the world all beautiful and bright.

"He that from dross would win the precious ore
Bends o'er the crucible an earnest eye,
The subtle searching process to explore,
Lest the one brilliant moment should pass by,
When in the molten silver's virgin mass
He meets his pictured face as in a glass!

"Thus in God's furnace are His people tried:
Thrice happy they who to the end endure.
But who the fiery trial may abide?
Who from the crucible come forth so pure
That, He whose eyes of flame look through the whole
May see His perfect image in the soul?

"Nor with an evanescent glimpse alone,
As in that mirror the refiner's face;
But stamped with heaven's broad signet there be shown
Immanuel's features full of truth and grace:
And round that seal of love this motto be,
Not for a moment—but eternity."

J. Montgomery.

Another thing which the text leads us to remark concerning the *successful* discipline of life is,—

II. It ALWAYS REQUIRES RELIGIOUS TEACHING. "If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man His uprightness." What is the religious

teaching that is essential? Not the teachings of theology and rubrics, but instruction in God's *righteousness*—"His uprightness." It is a teaching that has to do not merely with the imagination or the intellect, but mainly with the *conscience*. Righteousness appeals to the conscience, and this is the soul of the soul, the moral heart of the man. This is the teaching essential to successful moral discipline. No other can supply its place or supersede its necessity. Men must feel the righteousness of His *claims*. He claims their supreme affection, their unbounded trust and loyal obedience. Must not these, in order to be practically recognized, be felt as righteous? What man but he who is constrained from his inner heart to say, "Thy testimonies that Thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful," will ever render homage to such claims? He must say, ere he can yield,—There is nothing that Thou demandest of me but is unquestionably and absolutely right. It is the felt righteousness of His claims that reveals to man his true condition: shows to him his standing in the universe and his true relation to the Infinite. David felt this when he said, "I have seen an end of all perfection, for Thy commandment is exceeding broad." In its eternal light man feels, that whatever he has which the world considers great and valuable is mere trash, and that goodness alone is the real worth. When the "commandment" comes to a man, and flashes Divine righteousness on his conscience, does he not, like Paul, die to all he prized and loved before?

He must "show," moreover, not only the righteousness of His claims, but the righteousness of His *treatment*. In the greatest sufferings and severest trials of life, it is necessary for a man to feel, if he would succeed in the true moral scholarship of life, that "The right hand of the Lord is full of righteousness": that He is "righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works." Without this, could there be a loving and loyal submission to the Divine will, in which alone there is happiness? On the contrary, will there not be great murmurings and rebellions of heart?

Now, Elihu implies that such religious teaching is *rare*.

"An interpreter; one among a thousand." Where are the teachers to be found that flash God's righteousness upon the human conscience? Professed religious teachers, as compared to the population, are less than "one among a thousand;" and amongst the religious teachers who bring Divine righteousness to the conscience, the proportion, I fear, is still less. We have men who are everlastingly bringing to their hearers the Assembly's Catechism, the Thirty-nine Articles, Calvin's Institutes, and Wesley's theology; but how few bring Divine righteousness! Have not most of even our best "interpreters" gone from the Sermon on the Mount to Paul's theological discussions, in which there are some things "hard to be understood."

It is not until the world has true moral interpreters that cabinets will cease their intrigues, merchants and tradesmen their chicaneries, priests their impostures, monarchs their tyrannies, warriors their damnable profession, and all renounce their selfishness, their falsehoods, and their sins. We want the righteousness of God preached, and not the religions of man.

Thank God! the world has One such "Interpreter," One of Whom Elihu in all probability knew nothing—Christ the "Righteousness of God," He is the world's Interpreter, to show unto man God's "uprightness." This He does now by the faithful preaching of His faithful followers; and by His Spirit, whose prerogative it is to "convince men of sin, and righteousness, and judgment to come." Oh, let us, whose office it is to deal with human souls, seek to bring the character of Christ rather than the creed of Churches in contact with conscience. The world has no soul quickening, correcting, purifying, strengthening, and ennobling spiritual force but this. This is the world's "Sun of Righteousness."

Another thing which the text leads us to remark concerning the *successful* discipline of life is,—

III. It EVERMORE CULMINATES IN COMPLETE RESTORATION. "Then He is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom." Elihu proceeds on the assumption that the sufferings which

the man had endured, and the moral teachings of the "interpreter" had produced a proper effect on his heart, and had brought him into genuine sympathy with the mind and will of God. Such being the case, he says, God would be "gracious unto him," and would find "a ransom,"—which does not mean an atonement, but a valid reason for mercifully interposing on his behalf. In the genuine penitence of a man, Elihu regards the Almighty as having a sufficient reason for his deliverance. The restoration is here represented as a restoration to *health*: "His flesh shall be fresher than a child's." The physical sufferings, having answered their moral ends, cease; and the stream of health again flows through the veins and reinvigorates the frame with youthful energy. The restoration is here represented as a restoration to *Divine favour*: "He shall pray unto God, and He will be favourable unto him." The soul that had been clouded with remorse, pressed down with a sense of Divine displeasure, and blinded by corrupt feelings, shall be enabled to look up to God and "see His face with joy." The restoration is here represented as a restoration to *safety*. "He shall deliver his soul from going down to the pit, and his life shall see the light." The "pit" to which the sinner is exposed may stand to represent not only the grave, into which we must all descend; but, what is worse, all the moral ignorance, self-criminations, and dark forebodings to which all guilty souls are exposed. Deliverance from such a terrible "pit" and elevation to the "light" of the living, or the living light, are included in this restoration.

We are far enough from believing that Elihu understood all that we mean by this complete restoration of man; but to us the blessed assurance is given, that all who are truly repentant and regenerate shall have their "vile bodies fashioned and made like unto Christ's glorious body"—shall be raised from bondage and corruption to the glorious life and liberty of the children of God. The words of Elihu suggest two facts in relation to this true restoration.

First: *It is effected by the gracious agency of God.* "He is gracious unto him," etc. Who else could accomplish this? It

is a resurrection from the dead, a new creation ; and what but sovereign grace could inspire the Almighty to such an undertaking? This indeed is His great and constant work with humanity. "Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living." God works with all men, works with their circumstances, with their bodies, with their souls : works, as Elihu tells us, by visions of the night, by special afflictions, and by moral interpreters sent by Heaven. He thus works with each and all, in varied ways and without remission, in order to bring men back from the "pit"—a scene of darkness, confinement, and desolation—and give them the living light, the light of intelligence, purity, and joy.

Secondly : This gracious agency of God is *obtained in connection with penitential prayer*. "He looketh upon men," that is, as the margin has it, the penitent man looks upon his fellow-men and says from experience, "I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not." This is the language of true contrition. The genuinely penitent man never ascribes his sin to his organization or his circumstances, but to himself—"I have sinned." Now, it is this state of mind that ensures Divine interposition. Because of this He,—that is, God,—“will deliver his soul from going into the pit.” This moral state of mind is indispensable to man's complete restoration. If men repent, will not the Almighty save? "The Lord is nigh unto them which are of a broken heart, and saveth such as are of a contrite spirit." "If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways : then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." This is the great call of God to man in the Gospel. "In that time Jesus began to preach and say, Repent." "Except ye believe and repent, ye shall all likewise perish." "God commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

Such is the *successful discipline of life*, as suggested by the words of Elihu. In this school, afflictions are required, and

we have them. The human world is full of suffering. "Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward." "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble." In this school these troubles and trials are chastisements. In this school moral "interpreters" are required, and we have them in the books, in the examples, and in the teachings of the faithful followers of Him who is the One Infallible "Interpreter," Jesus Christ, the Righteous. In this school the complete restoration of man is the grand end.

The great question for us all to determine is, What are we doing in this school? How are we using our afflictions? As arguments to reflect on the benevolence of God, and as reasons for murmuring and repining under His dispensations? Or do we regard them as the chastenings of a loving Father? Are we so "exercised" by them that we feel that, like the gales of the mariner, they are bearing us away from those unholy scenes on which our hearts are set? How are we treating our moral "interpreters?" Do we close our ears to their instruction, and trifle with the admonitions of those who are seeking to show us the righteousness of God in all His procedure? Or do we hearken to their words with an ardent and sincere desire to know Him whom to know is life eternal? Are we getting restored, intellectually and morally restored by all the lessons and influences of His great school? Or are we getting more morally depressed and infirm? We shall soon have passed through this school. We shall only have a few more lessons a few more fleeting years or days, it may be, and our school-time will be over; and then, if we have not rightly improved our opportunities, we shall "mourn at the last," and say, "How have we hated instruction, and our heart despised reproof."

LIFE, A SOLEMN REALITY.—Thy life, wert thou the "pitifullest of all the sons of earth," is no idle dream, but a solemn reality. It is thy own; it is all thou hast to front eternity with. Work, then, even as He has done and does—like a star, unshining yet unshining.—*Thomas Carlyle.*

The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

Our Purpose.—Many learned and devout men have gone *philologically* through this *Textum*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough *homiletic* treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

Our Method.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) The *History* of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) *Annotations* of the passage. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3) The *Argument* of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) The *Homiletics* of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

No. CV.

Man's Enmity towards Man.

"HEAR MY VOICE, O GOD, IN MY PRAYER," etc.—*Psalm* lxiv. 1-10.

HISTORY.—This Psalm bears internal evidence that it is rightly ascribed to David. It bears a strong resemblance to *Psalm* liii. In truth, many of its expressions are identical. The secret counsel, the slander, the treachery, and the ungodliness of the adversaries suit the time of the Sauline persecution.

ANNOTATIONS: Ver. 1.—"*Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy.*" The "enemy" is either Saul or Absalom. His prayer is for protection.

Ver. 2.—"*Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity.*" Hide me from the

counsel of the evil, from the tumult of the workers of iniquity.

Ver. 3, 4.—"*Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words: that they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.*" Their slander, like a sword well whetted, cuts deep into the soul. "They were not merely common slanderers, but those which aim at the destruction of the slandered person, as was the case in the slanders directed by Saul and his faction against David. That they may shoot in secret at the perfect—like night murderers

waylaying the unwary traveller (Psalms x. iv.) "Suddenly do they shoot at him," when he least suspects danger, and "fear not" God and His coming judgment.

Ver. 5.—"They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, who shall see them?" They talk among themselves. Hiding snares. Hiding is necessarily involved in laying snares. Who shall see the snares which they lay? This is more natural than the so-called indirect form for "Who shall see us?"

Ver. 6.—"They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search." They make it their study to search out the most consummate plans of villany. They accomplish a diligent search. The idea is, that they leave no stone unturned in order to effect their purpose. "Both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep." He recognises their profound cleverness in all their inquiries and schemings.

Ver. 7.—"But God shall shoot at them with an arrow." But Elohim shall shoot at them with an arrow. Deep as they are, Omniscience observes their plans, and He frustrates them. Retribution comes. "Suddenly shall they be wounded." Suddenly do their wounds come. He shooteth them, and that with great suddenness, takes them by surprise, strikes them down before they are aware of it.

Ver. 8.—"So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves." The ruin they determine to bring upon him comes back upon themselves. Such was the case of Ahithophel, David's traitorous counsellor (2 Sam. xvii. 23). "All that see them shall flee away." Struck with consternation, they shall take flight.

Ver. 9.—"And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God." Spectators, struck with awe at this stroke of retribution, will declare it as the work of God. "For they shall wisely consider of His doing." They shall not only talk of this judgment, but they shall consider it well.

Ver. 10.—"The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in Him; and all the upright in heart shall glory." This is the effect which this retributive dispensation shall have upon the righteous, they will be glad, they will trust, they will "glory." The righteous shall not only acknowledge the judgment of God, but rejoice in it, and abide in Him as their impregnable fortress.

ARGUMENT.—This Psalm is composed of two parts. First: A prayer for deliverance from his enemies with a description of their character (ver. 1-6). Second: An expression of confident expectation that his prayer would be answered, and that God would interpose on his behalf (verses 7-10).

HOMILETICS.—The subject of this Psalm is *man's enmity towards man*. David refers to enemies. He had them in all fulness and malice, and in great numbers. Man is, and ever has been, at enmity with man. Every page in the history of the world, and every section in social life attests this solemn fact. This fact proves beyond debate that man is not morally in his normal condition. The social ties that bind man to man, the benevolent instincts implanted in every

bosom, and the conscience of all, proclaim that man was made to love his brother. We see this enmity here in three aspects:—

I. *PIOUSLY DREADED.* David *prays* against it. "Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy. Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked: from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity." It is satisfactory to find that David does not pray here, as in some other places, for the destruction of his enemies. But it is not satisfactory to find that he does not pray for their conversion or moral reformation. What he prays for, however, does not appear to be improper. He prays for his own protection. Self-preservation is a natural instinct, and it is right that it should have a religious expression. We see this enmity here,—

II. *CHARACTERISTICALLY WORKING.* How does enmity work generally?

First: *Clandestinely.* "Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked." Enmity in the heart, like poison in the serpent, has within it the instinct of cunning.

Secondly: *Slanderously.* "Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words: that they may shoot in secret." "Slander, whose edge," says Shakspeare, "is sharper than a sword." It strikes at the reputation of the foe, and reputation is as dear as life. It does not follow that because a community is comparatively free from contentions by material weapons and physical violence, that enmity is not at work. There is the "sword," the "bow," and the "arrow" of slander working malignantly and performing deadly deeds in all circles.

Thirdly: *Plottingly.* "They encourage themselves in an evil matter, they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?" It lays traps and snares for the foe everywhere—snares by which a man may lose his commercial credit, his domestic peace, his social reputation. What traps enmity has laid everywhere in society for its victims!

Fourthly: *Diligently.* "They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search." Enmity is not dormant or

lazy, nor a spasmodic agent, it is systematically and persistently active: it pursues its victim, tracks him until it finds him out, however labyrinthian the course. We see this enmity here,—

III. DIVINELY THWARTED. “God shall shoot at them with an arrow.”

First: *Unawares*. “God shall shoot at them with an arrow, suddenly.” Divine judgment will strike at the malignant man when he least expects it.

Secondly: *By its own agency*. “They shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves.” The malicious man must destroy himself. This is God’s law. “He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise.” “He taketh the wise in their own craftiness,” etc.

Thirdly: *In such a way as shall make an impression upon all*. “All men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God, for they shall wisely consider of His doing,” and “the righteous shall be glad in the Lord,” etc. What David here predicates of his enemies applies to all malignant men. Divine retribution will overtake them; they shall be baffled, thwarted, confounded, ruined.

DIVISION OF TIME.—The seven days is by far the most permanent division of time and the most ancient monument of astronomical knowledge. It was used by the Brahmins in India, with the same denomination used by us; and was likewise found in the calendars of the Jews, Arabs, Egyptians, and Assyrians. It has survived the fall of empires, and has existed among all successive generations: a proof of the common origin of mankind. The division of the year into months, etc., is very old, and almost universal, but not so ancient or uniform as the seven days, or week.—*Mrs. Somerville*.

TIME.—Darkness and light divide the course of time, and oblivion shares with memory a great part even of our living being: we slightly remember our felicities, and the smartest strokes of affliction leave but short smart upon us. Sense endureth no extremities, and sorrows destroy us or themselves. To weep into stones are fables. Afflictions induce callosities, miseries are slippery or fall like snow upon us, which, notwithstanding, is no unhappy stupidity. To be ignorant of evils to come, and forgetful of evils past, is a merciful provision of nature, whereas we digest the mixture of our few and evil days, and our delivered senses not relapsing into cutting remembrances, our sorrows are not kept raw by the edge of repetition.—*Browne*.

HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF JOB.

The Book of Job is one of the grandest sections of Divine Scripture. It has never yet, to our knowledge, been treated in a purely Homiletic method for Homiletic ends. Besides many learned expositions on the book found in our general commentaries, we have special exegetical volumes of good scholarly and critical worth; such as Drs. Barnes, Wemyss, Mason Goode, Noyes Lee, Delitzsch, and Herman Hedwick Bernard: the last is in every way a masterly production. For us, therefore, to go into philology and verbal criticism, when such admirable works are available to all students, would be superfluous, if not presumption. Ambiguous terms, when they occur, we shall of course explain, and occasionally suggest an improved rendering; but our work will be chiefly, if not entirely, Homiletic. We shall essay to bring out from the grand old words those Divine verities which are true and vital to man as man in all lands and ages. These truths we shall frame in an order as philosophic and suggestive as our best powers will enable us to do; and this in order to help the earnest preachers of God's Holy Word.

No. LXIX.

The First Speech of Elihu.—5. The Successful Discipline of Life.

“HE IS CHASTENED ALSO,” etc.—*Job xxxiii. 19-33.*

EXEGETICAL REMARKS: Ver. 19.—

“*He is chastened also with pain upon his bed.*” From here to the end of the chapter, Elihu indicates even severer methods than alarming dreams employed by God to discipline the human soul. “He is chastened also with pain upon his bed.” He is subjected to severe physical sufferings. “*And the multitude of his bones with strong pain.*” Strong pain is the multitude of his pains.

Ver. 20.—“*So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat.*” This is the natural effect of great corporeal suffering. Instead of a craving for food, there is a disgust or nausea, even the dainties are loathed.

Ver. 21.—“*His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen.*” Another effect of physical suffering; the fires of pain consume the fat. “*And his bones that were not seen stick out.*” His bones protrude and he appears as a mere skeleton.

Ver. 22.—“*Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.*” The soul here, as elsewhere, does not mean the spirit, as distinguished from the

body, but life—the man himself.

“The meaning is, that the afflicted man comes very near to those acute sufferings which terminate life, and which by personification are here represented as the authors of death.”

Ver. 23, 24.—“*If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness: then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.*” Dr. Samuel Davidson's translation of these verses, which we prefer to any other, runs as follows:—“If there be for him an angel, an intercessor, one of the thousand, to show man what is right; then he is gracious to him and saith, deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom, then his flesh becomes fresher than in youth.” There is no reference here to the Messiah, but to some one who is divinely commissioned to interpret the procedure of God to the soul of the afflicted. In all probability, Elihu refers to himself, as one qualified for this high office. He seems to suppose, that if the af-

afflicted man is thoroughly satisfied with the rectitude of God in his sufferings, that the Almighty would then be "gracious" unto him and deliver him from going down to the pit, having sufficient reason for doing so. This is meant, I think, by the expression, "I have found a ransom." The man is brought into a proper state of mind; and in this I discover a sufficient reason why he should not die, but be delivered.

Ver. 25.—"*His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth.*" For "child" the margin reads "childhood." "The meaning," says Dr. Barnes, "is obvious. He would be restored again to health. The calamity which had been brought upon him for purposes of discipline would be removed. This was the theory of Elihu in regard to afflictions, and he undoubtedly meant that it should be applied to Job. If he would now, understanding the nature and design of affliction, turn to God, he would be recovered again, and enjoy the health and vigour of his youth."

Ver. 26.—"*He shall pray unto God.*" Elihu now, to the end of the chapter, points out the conduct of a true penitent, and the Divine deliverance and blessedness which would be vouchsafed to him. "*He shall pray unto God.*" That is, when he is brought into a proper state of mind by being convinced of the righteousness of his Maker, he will pray. True repentance leads to prayer. "*He will be favourable unto him: and he shall see His face with joy.*" Why? Because "*He will render unto man his righteousness.*" "He, the Almighty, will deal with him in justice and equity. When He sees evidence of penitence, He will treat him accordingly: and if in the afflicted man He discerns true piety, He will regard and treat him as His friend."

Ver. 27.—"*He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not.*" In the margin it reads, "He shall look upon men and say." Some render it, "Now he sings joyfully among men." Umbreit, Noyes, Delitzsch and others generally agree in this rendering. It gives the idea that the afflicted penitent, having been pardoned, sings out with joy to men—"I have sinned," etc. But I rather agree with Lee, Bernard, and Barnes in accepting the present version, which points to God. "He," that is God, "looketh upon men." The meaning seems to be, that the Almighty carefully observes the conduct of men; and where He discovers genuine penitence, He compassionates and blesses. Anyhow, this is a glorious truth.

Ver. 28.—"*He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.*" "He hath delivered my soul from going down to the pit, and my life rejoices in the light."—*Delitzsch*. Most commentators accept the present version.

Ver. 29, 30.—"*Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.*" "God repeatedly warns and admonishes them either in dreams or by severe afflictions, these being, in fact, the language which He employs towards men, and a language well befitting the Creator, when He would hold communication with His creatures: a language which He employs to make man's soul turn from the pit, to the brink of which he has either brought himself by the wicked deeds which he has committed, or would have brought himself by the wicked deeds which he was on the point of committing when he received these timely admonitions."—*Bernard*.

Ver. 31, 32, 33.—“*Mark well, O Job, and hearken unto me : hold thy peace, and I will speak. If thou hast anything to say, answer me : speak, for I desire to justify thee. If not, hearken unto me : hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.*” “But I have not quite done yet. I have something yet to add, and therefore attend, O Job, listen unto me : keep silence, and I will speak. If thou hast words to oppose to mystatements, reply to me : speak, for I delight in pronouncing thee to have been righteous, before thy afflictions came upon thee. Thou needest not fear that I will tax thee, as did thy friends, with sins and crimes

to which thou mayest have been an utter stranger ; on the contrary, it is my delight to think that thy former life was free from spot or blemish, and that thou only hast begun to wander and go wrong since these afflictions came upon thee, and that for the simple reason that thou wast unable to penetrate the object with which they were sent upon thee.” If thou hast none. If thou beginnest to see that what I say is true, then listen thou to me. Keep silence, and I will teach thee wisdom. I will show thee that the wisdom of God passeth all human understanding.”

HOMILETICS.—For Homiletical Remarks see, Leading Homily of the present number, page 401.

SERMONIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form, of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are :—“Introduction to New Testament,” by Bleek ; “Commentary on John,” by Tholuck ; “Commentary on John,” by Hengstenberg ; “Introduction to the Study of the Gospels,” by Westcott ; “The Gospel History,” by Ebrard ; “Our Lord's Divinity,” by Liddon ; “St. John's Gospel,” by Oostersee ; “Doctrine of the Person of Christ,” by Dorner ; Lange ; etc., etc.

No. LXIX.

The Man Born Blind. Types of Character in Relation to Christ's Work.—3. Those who are bitterly Prejudiced against Christ's Work.

“AND IT WAS THE SABBATH DAY WHEN JESUS MADE THE CLAY, AND OPENED HIS EYES. THEN AGAIN THE PHARISEES ALSO ASKED HIM HOW HE HAD RECEIVED HIS SIGHT. HE SAID UNTO THEM, HE PUT CLAY UPON MINE EYES, AND I WASHED, AND DO SEE. THEREFORE SAID SOME OF THE PHARISEES, THIS MAN IS NOT OF GOD, BECAUSE HE KEEPETH NOT THE SABBATH DAY. OTHERS SAID, HOW CAN A MAN THAT IS A SINNER DO SUCH MIRACLES ? AND THERE WAS A DIVISION AMONG THEM. THEY SAY UNTO THE BLIND MAN AGAIN, WHAT SAYEST THOU OF HIM, THAT HE HATH OPENED THINE EYES ? HE SAID, HE IS A

PROPHET. BUT THE JEWS DID NOT BELIEVE CONCERNING HIM, THAT HE HAD BEEN BLIND, AND RECEIVED HIS SIGHT, UNTIL THEY CALLED THE PARENTS OF HIM THAT HAD RECEIVED HIS SIGHT."—*John ix. 14-18.*

EXPOSITION: Ver. 14.—"*And it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.*" This fact, that the miracle was done on the Sabbath, is here noted in connection with the tribunal; and the making of the clay is probably mentioned as a species of labour, which their law pronounced illegal. "Jesus had certainly of set purpose chosen the Sabbath for His work of healing. He designed to give matter of offence to the Pharisees, who, by their exaggerated severity in the external rites of the Sabbath festival, sought to compensate for their lacking spiritual service. (Augustine: *Sabbatum carnaliter observabant spiritualiter sistebant.*) And He would teach the people how the Sabbath was really to be used. His polemic in act was not directed against Moses, but against the caricature into which Pharisaism had turned the Mosaic Sabbath. The Sabbath was a rest from evil, as also from servile works, which centre in ourselves. But it was not to be a day of rest when the honour of God and the furtherance of our neighbour's good were concerned."—*Hengstenberg.*

Ver. 15.—"*Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight.*" This question had been propounded by the "neighbours" in verse 10. And it is again repeated by the Pharisees. "*He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.*" The answer which the man gives is according to the fact as recorded in verses 6, 7.

Ver. 16.—"*Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This Man is not of God, because He keepeth not the Sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?*" "*Therefore.*" That is,

in consequence of the man's unflinching statement. They had hoped that he would invalidate the miracle by his testimony; but failing of this, they proceed to invalidate it against testimony by reasonings of their own. "*Others said.*" One party said, He is a sinner; and this cannot be a miracle. The other party said, This is a miracle; so He cannot be a sinner. Had the deed truly been a sin, the reasoning of the first party would have been correct. The premise of the second party proved, not only that Jesus was no sinner, but that He was a messenger of God.

Ver. 17.—"*They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of Him, that He hath opened thine eyes?*" Stress is to be laid on the word "thou." "What sayest thou?" The reply of the others was contradictory, and therefore did not satisfy inquiry. What sayest thou? No doubt, in appealing thus directly to him, they expected he would say something unfavourable to Christ. But they were disappointed. "*He said, He is a prophet.*" Without any circumlocution, he says, "He is a prophet."

Ver. 18.—"*But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.*" Thus disconcerted, failing to obtain any information that went to condemn Christ, they adopt the pretext of appealing to his parents, hoping no doubt that they could extract from them the confession that he was not "born blind." They did not believe until they called the parents; not as if they would have then believed. "The meaning is, that unbelief led them to this procedure."—*Hengstenberg.*

HOMILETICS.—The types of characters in relation to Christ's work which are represented in these verses, are those who are bitterly *prejudiced against* His work. Such were the Pharisees. They were determined if possible to deny the fact that the man's eyes were opened; and if they failed in this, to prove that Christ was guilty of punishment because He broke the Sabbath. Four facts marked the conduct of these men.

I. THEY WERE TECHNICAL RATHER THAN MORAL IN THEIR STANDARDS OF JUDGMENT. "Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because He keepeth not the Sabbath day." Christ had performed the miracle on the Sabbath. In this He struck a blow at the prejudices of these hypocrites, and declared, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." These Pharisees, instead of thanking God that their poor brother before them had his eyes opened, and expressing a solicitude to get a knowledge of Him who had accomplished such a wonderful work, endeavour to make the whole thing a ceremonial crime. They had a greater respect for ceremonies than for souls. The Pharisees exalted the letter above the spirit, the ritual above the moral. Their sympathies were more with dead ceremonies than with living men.

Another fact which marked the conduct of these men was,—

II. THEY WERE BIASED RATHER THAN CANDID IN THEIR EXAMINATION OF EVIDENCE. They had made up their minds not to believe the fact; and all their examination, their questionings and cross questionings, were intended to throw discredit upon it. They did not want evidence. If evidence came up, they would endeavour to suppress or misinterpret it. The uncandid spirit breathes through the whole of their conduct. This endeavour to reject the truth which clashes with prejudices is, alas! too common in every age. The conduct of the Pharisees on this occasion shows the blindness of prejudiced minds and the heartlessness of technical religion.

Another fact which marked the conduct of these men was,—

III. THEY WERE DIVIDED RATHER THAN UNITED IN THEIR CONCLUSION. "There was a division among them." There were some, perhaps Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, touched a

little with the sentiment of justice and candour, who could not but see something of the divinity of the act. Infidels ridicule Christians for their divisions, whilst they themselves are never agreed. Error is necessarily schismatic. Evil has no power to unite: it is as changeable as the chameleon. Examine the theories of infidelity.

The other fact which marked the conduct of these men was,

IV. THEY WERE MALIGNANT RATHER THAN GENEROUS IN THEIR AIMS. If their purposes had been generous, they would have been predisposed to believe in the mission of a Divine Restorer. Instead of which, they are determined to repudiate the fact. Their heartless treatment of the young man in brow-beating him, the readiness and delight with which they seized the conclusion that Christ was a sinner, and the violence with which they cast out of the synagogue those who believed in Him, all show that the malign, and not the benign, was their inspiration.

CONCLUSION.—This class of men is not extinct. There are those who are bitterly prejudiced against Christianity in every region of Christendom. The most patent facts they dispute and deny. They are proof against all argument. Prejudice turns a man into a kind of behemoth, whose heart is as "firm as stone," as "hard as a piece of molten mill-stone." All your "sling stones" of argument are turned "with him into stubble." He "laugheth at the shaking" of your dialectic "spear."

The Preacher's Germs of Thought.

Christ's Predictions, His Credentials.

"THESE THINGS HAVE I TOLD YOU, THAT WHEN THE TIME SHALL COME, YE MAY REMEMBER THAT I TOLD YOU OF THEM."—*John* xvi. 4.



E stand "on a narrow neck of land," on which a pencil of light, not always equally brilliant, beats. This footroom is called *the Present*. Behind us, blackness is folding up the road as rapidly as we walk; but we can see into it a short distance. It is called *the Past*. Before us, close to us, with no gradual shading off of the light, rises a

perpendicular, unbroken wall of darkness, so perfect in its blackness that the eye aches. We cannot see into it an inch; at each step we plant our advancing foot in it. The name of this region is *the Future*. Those who have traversed much of *the Past*,—we call them the old,—are always welcome for what they can tell of that region; and it is the life-work of some to gather the mementoes that travellers have brought thence, and write of its geography and deeds, as geologists tell us of old worlds from the *débris* in the strata. This is *History*.

But the earnestness of the desire to learn about the *Future* is still greater; it is measured by the impossibility of its satisfaction. Some sit down and spend their whole lives gazing at the black wall, and fancy beguiles them into thinking they see something there, like pictures in an ebon frame. Let any one profess to have a revelation of futurity, and he needs little credential besides his claim. Let him be Spiritualist or Gipsy, he has hosts of followers.

There is just One who has taught with authority of the future—Jesus. It was only seldom and slightly He lifted the corner of the veil which hides from us that “unseen Present we call the Future;” but even these hints of futurity must have been one of the chief charms of His conversation.

His method of reference to the Future is unique. His teaching is not, like another Old Testament, divided into Historical and Poetical and Prophetical. God was now speaking direct, and He speaks like one standing on a commanding eminence, the Past and Future equally in view. And so we find the doctrine, the prophecy, the historical lesson, all fitting together, not a great continent of each lying side by side, but in perfect mosaic, and like Milton’s rainbow “with colours dipt in heaven.”

In the context our Lord had been predicting to the disciples the fierce persecution they would encounter—even their countrymen and their Church opposing them. This must have seemed strange to the disciples, as their minds were filled with thoughts of an earthly kingdom. At first sight it might appear as though our Lord were “borrowing trouble.”

But no! "Behind a frowning Providence He hides a smiling face." The text gives the *rationale* of the predictions. It was, that when the misfortune should come, the fact that Jesus had foreseen the evil would be some assurance to the disciples that He had power to control it, that their "greater Prophet" would be able, like Elijah, both to foretell the famine and to remove it.

The subject of the text is *Christ's Prediction, His Credentials*. This may be one strand in the indestructible cable of evidence that binds humanity to the anchor fixed within the veil. Christ's own predictions regarding Himself and His Church should be admitted as evidence as strong as the prophecies of others concerning Him. He said of the woman who broke the box of spikenard over His feet, that what she had done should be told as a memorial of her, wherever the Gospel should be preached in the whole world. How unlikely that this slender incident should survive the struggle for "the survival of the fittest," a not very remarkable occurrence in a dwelling-house in an insignificant village of a depised country.

Our Lord said, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power." This saying was opposed to the whole tone of mankind, and indeed of the Christian Church. But how fully the failures of would-be interpreters of prophecy have illustrated it.

We shall consider in outline three classes of our Lord's predictions.

I. THOSE CONCERNING THE NATURE AND PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH.

1. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." A sentence spoken in conversation during a walk, by a man of no note, in an obscure corner of the world, in a language not known to the ruling nations, or by the civilization of the day, spoken by a mere tribe—surely all probability would say that such a sentence would be a fit emblem of evanescence. Well, whether was Christ or probability right?

2. "I am come that they might have life." I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me, should

not abide in darkness." "I am the light of the world." "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

If these words mean anything, they mean that their Author arrogates to Himself the prerogative of being both Light and Life to humanity, and that in His gift is all real freedom. Has history proved these words to be the language of Oriental hyperbole, or sober truth?

As regards *Life*, is it not true that those nations which possess life and energy, which are the pulsating heart of the world, propelling the life-blood to the extremities, are the Christian nations.

And is it not true that Christ is the *Light* of the world, illuminating the path of life, revealing responsibility, dissipating ignorance, cruelty, superstition, and all the brood that nestle and cower in darkness. Look at facts. "Christianity abolished gladiatorial shows and the throwing of prisoners to wild beasts. The worst forms of licentiousness indulged in by the heroes of Greece and Rome, and attributed to their deities," dare not now in Christendom show their heads abroad. "The respect paid to woman is due, before any other cause, to the honour with which the Great Founder of our faith treated those women who waited on Him, and to His filial reverence for His mother."

Our Domestic Morals. The sanctity of marriage. What heathen nation could rise to the sublimity of the proverb, "Marriages are made in heaven"? Hospitals for the sick and wounded. The softening of the horrors of war. Contrast the conduct of Titus and of Gustavus Adolphus upon entering a captured city. Contrast the benevolence of the Germans when the starving Parisians surrendered, with the malice of the Communists a few weeks later—a tribe who believed in no God, no hereafter, no sin, no virtue, nothing but "better wages and more pleasure." Consider the present excitement in England about the Bulgarian horrors. A nation is pulling at the leash, impatient to spring to war, not for territorial gain, not for glory, not because of national insult, but because humanity has been insulted. Would such a manifestation of

moral life, such a recognition of the brotherhood of humanity, have ever been possible in heathendom?

Freedom, politically, socially, intellectually. The Reformation set free men's minds, and brought about the immense mental activity of this age.

3. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came, not to send peace, but a sword." A doubting Thomas might have questioningly balanced this with His prophetic title, "the Prince of Peace." Has not Christ's prediction proved true? Religious wars have desolated the world. This need not contradict His peaceful Name. First *purity*, then, and not till then, as its consequence, *peace*. War may be necessary to peace. Pitt said, "I love peace; but if honour is to be the price of our tranquillity, let discord reign."

4. "My kingdom is not of this world." Almost in proportion as Christians have lived and worked in the spirit of these words, the Church has succeeded.

II. INTERCOURSE OF GOD WITH HUMANITY.

"If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."

Here we have suggested a method for scientifically testing the value of revelation. Let the unbeliever or doubter put these words to the proof. Let him do what Jesus declares in His words and actions as the will of God, and see whether, coming into this reverent, humble, obedient frame of mind, he will not also come into a living and comforting assurance of the reality of the mysteries of religion.

III. COMMUNION OF GOD WITH BELIEVERS.

"My peace I give unto you." "In the world ye shall have tribulation." I am with you always." This has ever been the experience of Christians. Affliction disciplining, and peace sustaining, and a consciousness of the loving presence of Jesus, "unseen, yet oh! how lovingly beholding!" A consciousness, the clearer as the gloom deepens, as the stars come out brighter when the darkness thickens.

GEORGE C. JONES, A.M.

Mansfield, Penn., United States.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

Christmas: "Things are not what they Seem."

"AND THIS SHALL BE A SIGN UNTO YOU; YE SHALL FIND THE BABE WRAPPED IN SWADDLING CLOTHES, LYING IN A MANGER."—*Luke ii. 12.*

THESE are the words of an angel, that came in the stillness of the night to the shepherds at Bethlehem, announcing the birth of the world's Redeemer. The whole narrative is sublimely and suggestively interesting. But we shall confine ourselves strictly to the text. "This shall be a sign unto you." In looking at the Holy Babe in the manger "wrapped in swaddling clothes" we observe four things,—

I. THE SUPERNATURAL IN THE APPARENTLY NATURAL. To the common observer the outward circumstances connected with the Saviour's birth were ordinary and commonplace enough; they were what we should call in common language, *natural*. A Child is born, born at night, born in poverty—born, and the mother wraps it in "swaddling clothes." There is nothing wonderful in this. But underlying all is the *supernatural*. That Child was in a special sense a supernatural production. By the supernatural I do not mean what is beyond the laws of nature

—for I do not know how far the laws of nature extend—but I mean that which is *unaccountable*. In this sense the supernatural underlies all material phenomena, for there is a point where the most keensighted and far-going science reaches, even in connection with the most insignificant parts of existence—where it meets with the unaccountable: and where it hears a voice rising from the profoundest abysses of mystery:—"Great things doeth He, which we cannot comprehend." It is not only so in nature but so also in the Bible. There is a deal of the natural in the Book. It is full of human nature. Much of its thinkings and sympathies are human; its literature is human; but, underlying all, there is the supernatural and the unaccountable. It is not only the record of certain miracles, but is itself a miracle. "Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." This supernaturalness—this mystery—that pervades nature and the Bible seems to me essential to the spiritual culture and well-being of intelligent creatures. Could we explain everything in nature, translate the whole into intelligible propositions, would not its poetry and sublimity vanish? Would it

not be to us a mere commonplace machine? And could we understand the whole of the Bible, where would be its suggestiveness, where its incitement to thought, where its humbling and devotional influences? Without mystery there would be no wonder, no worship, no soul-stirring and uplifting force. In looking at this Babe in the manger we observe,—

II. THE ADORABLE IN THE SECULARLY CONTEMPTIBLE. To the eye of the proud world there would be few domestic scenes more mean and pitiable than this poor village carpenter of Nazareth and his wife in the stable at Bethlehem, and their Infant cradled in a manger. The poverty-stricken appearance of this domestic scene would repel all worldly men. Instead of entering it, they would shun it as something beneath their notice. There are but few in any generation to whom the cot of poverty is an attraction. Albeit, amidst all these surroundings of indigence there was the *adorable*. It may be asked, What is the essence of the adorable, the essence of that which moral minds are made to reverence and to worship? *Disinterested love*. God is the Adorable One because He is Love. In this manger there it is, in its most impressive manifestation. That Infant need not have come into the world at all, and need not

certainly have come in that form. Of all the human beings that have appeared on this earth He alone had the power of determining whether He should be born or not, and, if born, where, of whom, and when. Having chosen to come, He might have appeared in the magnificent palace of Herod, which was hard by the stable, or in the palace of Cæsar himself. But He “made Himself of no reputation.” Here then, in that Babe in “swaddling clothes,” you have a manifestation of free, disinterested, self-sacrificing love; and this is the essence of the morally adorable. Let us learn to see the morally great in the secularly contemptible. How often it turns out that this love, the very substratum of all virtue, is found in those who live in miserable hovels and are wrapped in swaddling rags. Still, they who have it are wealthier, nobler, and happier than the ungodly worldling clad in purple and faring sumptuously every day. Let us reverence this wherever seen. In looking at this Babe in the manger we observe,—

III. THE PREDESTINED IN THE SEEMINGLY CASUAL. The birth of the Babe in the manger would be regarded by the mere common observer as a somewhat *accidental* occurrence. It had entered the head of the Emperor Augustus to enroll all the names of

the members of the house of David in a census. Fallen as were the fortunes both of Joseph and Mary, they were still of the family of David. In compliance with the royal edict they left their home at Nazareth, and they reached Bethlehem, their native city, some eighty miles from their home. "And so it was, that while they were there the days were accomplished that she should be delivered." All these circumstances seemed to be mere casual occurrences; but what is chance on earth is law in heaven. That Christ would be born in Bethlehem was a decree older than the universe. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been of old from everlasting." The Eternal has no space in immensity for the play of chance. "All things are ordered of the Lord. "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my good pleasure." "There are many devices in man's heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." There is the eternal the temporary, there is the

settled in the shifting, there is the immutable amidst all the revolutions of time. His eternal purpose runs through the circle of the sun.

In looking at this Babe in the manger, we observe,—

IV. THE MIGHTY IN THE MATERIALLY FEEBLE. What an appearance of frailty and feebleness were in this stable! The exhausted mother, the helpless Babe guarded by one fragile man. But under all this apparent weakness there is Almighty power. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called wonderful, counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." In that cradle there was moral omnipotence in embryo. From that manger there has already gone forth an influence that has created Christendom and populated heaven with millions of human souls. This manger was as the spring of a river that has been rolling down for eighteen centuries, ever widening and deepening as it proceeds, and which will one day swell into an ocean on whose majestic bosom the whole human race will voyage to a blessed immortality. There is often great moral might in feeble organizations.

CONCLUSION. — (1) Despise not the day of small things. All great things were once small,

and there is more honour in appreciating them in their incipient stages than in their full growth. (2) Judge not from appearances. There is oftentimes more true greatness in a hut than on a throne, in the realm of poverty than in the domain of wealth. (3) Do not decorate the truth. Christianity does not require your gorgeous ritualisms nor your pulpit ornamentations. All it requires is the "swaddling clothes" of common life and common language. (4) See God in the comparatively insignificant. God is as truly in the atom as in the mountain, in the ripples of the rivulet as in the roarings of the thunder. He was in the stable at Bethlehem as well as in the palace of the Cæsars. He is in every thing, in the little as well as in the great.

God the Constant Friend of the Good.

"I WILL NEVER LEAVE THEE, NOR FORSAKE THEE."—*Heb. xiii. 5.*

"So the Lord spake once to Joshua (*Josh. i. 5*), when the latter approached an interesting turning point in his life, and trembled, not without reason, at the desperate conflict which the seizure of Canaan would necessitate. In good time Eternal Faithfulness had read in the bowed-down heart of His servant the need for encouragement and

strengthening. Even before the passage of the Jordan, Joshua receives the promise of His continued nearness."

Notice two things,—

I. The sense in which these words will apply to ALL MEN, GOOD AND BAD. The Eternal says this to all His moral creatures; even to the vilest, basest, fiend He virtually says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." My presence will always be with thee. Ever shall I be in contact with thee; from Me, no more than from thyself, canst thou escape. My eye shall be on thee, peering into the profoundest abysses of thy being and discerning the most hidden and secret thoughts, emotions, and resolves. My hand shall ever sustain thee. "I will beset thee behind and before." Though My presence is abhorrent to thee, and thou wouldest give the universe, if thou hadst it, to escape from Me, "I will never leave thee." Though thou hatest Me, cursest Me, risest in fierce hostility against Me, I will be with thee, in all conditions, places, and times. The creature cannot detach himself from the Creator; the chains that link them together are unbreakable. "Whither shall I flee from Thy presence?" etc. (*See Psalm cxxxix.*) If this be so,—

First: How miserable must be the condition of those who are at enmity with Him. Can

there be greater torment than to be linked for ever to one you hate and loathe; than to feel that his eye watches you, his presence pursues you, his character flashes its purity upon your corruption? And all this for ever, no hope of separation, no hope that there will ever sound the jubilee of deliverance. If this be so,—

Secondly: How urgent the necessity of cultivating a loving sympathy with Him. The more we love a being, the more we crave his presence, the more we dread and deplore his absence. Those who love God feel that in His "presence is fulness of joy." He is the "spring of all their joys, the life of their delights."

Notice,—

II. The sense in which these words will apply to the GOOD, AND THE GOOD ONLY. This is the sense in which the words are used here. It involves this: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" as a FRIEND. All good for all times, all circumstances, all worlds, is involved in this promise. As a FRIEND, He has at once the disposition and the power to make us happy for ever. Let us lay emphasis on the I: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Your health is leaving you, your property is leaving you, your earthly friends are leaving you; all around you is gradually, imperceptibly, but really vanishing from you, but I will never

leave you. "The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from thee."

CONCLUSION.—With such a promise, with what sublime serenity should the good man move amidst all the roughest storms of life. How superior he should feel to all the changing scenes and fortunes of his mortal state; with what invincible heroism he should pursue the path of duty; with what fearlessness and magnanimity of soul he might well hail the last hour.

A noted American preacher says somewhere in the narrative of his life, when speaking of this passage, "When in a moment of distress I read these words, they seemed to contain a message from God to me, as though a bright angel had stood beside me."

Praising the Dead more than the Living.

"WHEREFORE I PRAISED THE DEAD WHICH ARE ALREADY DEAD MORE THAN THE LIVING WHICH ARE YET ALIVE."—*Eccles. iv. 2.*

IN the preceding verse Solomon's thoughts were engaged in contemplating the most terrible subject, the oppressions and woes of society. "So I returned and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun." In every age and land, alas! such a subject as this presses heavily upon the minds of thoughtful men.

The best men in England to-day are bowed down at the sight of the oppressions and the woes that are rife in this highly favoured land.

This subject led the royal sage to "praise the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive." As if he had said, It is far better for men to be in their graves than for them to endure what I see them enduring all around me.

But although this is the primary meaning of the passage, it may be fairly used to represent a prevalent tendency amongst men, viz., the tendency to praise dead men rather than the living. Christ recognized this tendency in the Pharisees. "Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them" (Luke xi. 47). We offer two remarks concerning this tendency.

I. It is COMMON. We see it in the *political* sphere. Great statesmen, while they live, are the objects of hostile criticism and heartless censure. All beyond their partisans, see nothing in them but the venal and the vile. They die, and their virtues are not only recognized but emblazoned in every journal. We see it in the *ecclesiastical* sphere. Talented, cultured, devout, faithful preachers, who are often disparaged, and perhaps denounced, by many

of their congregation during life, have their praises loudly sung when the sod is green on their dust. We see it in the *domestic* sphere. The husband, the wife, the parent, the child, in all this tendency is seen. So it has become a proverb, that the best men must die ever to have their virtues recognized. Why is this?

First: *The dead are no longer competitors.* Living men, even the best, are in some way or other rivals to some men; and the passions of envy and jealousy are evoked, which hide from us their virtues. Not so with the dead. They are competitors and rivals no more.

Secondly: *Social love buries their defects.* In all, the great Father of Love has put a deep fountain of sympathy. Death unseals it, melts it, and causes it to flow forth in such copious streams as drown all the imperfections of the departed. Thus it turns out that survivors make the greatest sinners the greatest saints, after their death; and society is ever ready to canonize scoundrels. Another remark we offer concerning this tendency is,—

II. It is IMMORAL. It is not *right*. Virtue should be recognised and honoured wherever seen; and more so in the duties and struggles of life than in the reminiscences of departed worth. It is not *generous*.

That husband is mean and despicable who ignores the virtues of a noble wife while living, etc., etc. Whilst flattery is the ministry of the mean in soul, the frank acknowledgment and the hearty praise of real virtue are at once the effects and evidences of magnanimous natures. It is *unreal*. To praise virtues in a man when dead, which were ever unnoticed when living, is hypocritical. Hence memoirs and biographies are rife with hypocrisy, and steam with the false and the mawkish in sentiment.*

Honour the memory of the holy dead by all means; but prove the sincerity of that honour by a practical appreciation of living worth. Walk with a reverent step over the graves of the dead men who are gone; but deal generously and tenderly with the good men who are living now.

Notes on the Apostles' Creed.—8. "Dead."

"THEY SAW THAT HE WAS DEAD."—
John xix. 33.

A THOUSAND rays converge on the Dead Christ. As we reverently look at Him, not now toiling or suffering, but actually lifeless, we may solemnly notice—

* This idea is more fully wrought out in *Homilist*, Series II., vol. iv., p. 502.

I. How His death IDENTIFIES Him with men. Of all the millions who have lived, every man but two have died. It is the common ending of human biography. It was the lot of the Lord Jesus Christ. This shows us,—

1. *His actual manhood*. He did not, as an early heresy taught, simply come in the appearance of a mortal; He was no phantom man, but there was a literal, actual, combination of human body and human soul in Him, as there is in us. There were the same elements, that underwent the same dissolution. We may emphatically say, as we see Him dead, "Behold the MAN!" for if He were God alone, He could not die.

2. *His complete sharing of our lot*. He so completely condescends to fellowship with us that He is born in weakness, develops by the law of gradual growth, is tempted, weeps, suffers, and dies. Thus He completely wraps round Him the garments of our weakness and mortality, the very shroud of our shame and death.

II. How His death DISTINGUISHES Him from men. The works of contrast between His death and that of men generally are,—

1. *The extraordinary phenomena that attended it*. The stars do not grow dim when the astronomer dies, nor the fields wither when the farmer

dies; but here the earth shook, the sun was darkened, all nature seemed to cry,—What does this death mean?

2. *The perfect voluntariness with which it was met.* Whilst other men have no choice as to whether they should be born or no, and some,—as Dean Swift showed, by spending its returning anniversary in bewailing his birth,—wish they never had been born, He willed His birth: “Then said I, Lo, I come: I delight to do Thy will.” Then, being here, He might have avoided death, choosing translation; or might have modified it. But He endured the cross, despising the shame.

3. *The peculiar agony He endured in it.* And that agony was not merely physical, but spiritual.

4. *The complete vicarious-*

ness that belonged to it. Even when others die as martyrs or as patriots, the whole act of death cannot be for others. It is the wages of each man's sin, the debt of each human life. But He died entirely as Representative, Sponsor, Atonement. He gave Himself for us all.

5. *The universal interest that centres in it.* Every death stirs some circle of emotion and interest—a home, a church—a nation; but none reach so deep and wide an influence as this. What centres in it? (1) *Christ's own fixed purposes.* (2) *The plans of God.* (3) *The interest of angels.* (4) *The teachings of all Holy Scripture.* (5) *The faith of Christians.* “Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?”

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

TIME.—When Drexeling was asked by his friend Faustinus how he could do so much as he had done, he answered: The year has 365 days, or 8460 hours; in so many hours great things can be done; the slow tortoise made a long journey by losing no time.—*Bishop Horne.*

HOPE IN THE CROSS.

If the wanderer his mistake discern,
Judge his own ways, and sigh for a return,
Bewildered once, must he bewail his loss
For ever and for ever? No; the Cross!
There and there only (though the Deist rave
And Atheist, if earth bear so base a slave,)—
There and there only, is the power to save.
There no delusive hope invites despair;
No mockery meets you, no delusion there;
The spell and charm that blinded you before,
All vanish there, and fascinate no more.—*Wm. Cowper.*

Seeds of Sermons from the Minor Prophets.

If the Bible as a whole is inspired, it is of vast importance that all its Divine ideas should be brought to bear upon the living world of men. Though the pulpit is the organ Divinely intended for this work, it has been doing it hitherto in a miserably partial and restricted method. It selects isolated passages, and leaves whole chapters and books for the most part untouched. Its conduct to the Minor Prophets may be taken as a case in point. How seldom are they resorted to for texts! and yet they abound with splendid passages throbbing with Divine ideas. It is our purpose to go through this section of the Holy Word; selecting, however, only such verses in each chapter and book as seem the most suggestive of truths of the most vital interest and universal application.

But little is known of NAHUM, whose name signifies comfort. He was a native of El-Kosh; generally supposed to be a Galilean village. He lived probably in or about the year B.C., 714. The burden of his prophecy is the destruction of Nineveh, which destruction was predicted by Jonah a century before. Nineveh was destroyed about a century after this prophecy was uttered, and so complete was its overthrow that the very site where it stood is a matter of conjecture. The prophecy, though divided into three chapters, is a continuous poem of unrivalled spirit and sublimity, and admirable for the elegance of its imagery.

"The third chapter is a very striking description of a siege—the rattle of the war chariot, the gleam of the sword, the trench filled with corpses, the ferocity of the successful invaders, the panic of the defeated, the vain attempts to rebuild the crumbling battlements, final overthrow and ruin."

NAHUM.

No. CCLVII.

Great Sins bringing Great Ruin.

"THE BURDEN OF NINEVEH. THE BOOK OF THE VISION OF NAHUM THE ELKOSHITE. GOD IS JEALOUS, AND THE LORD REVENGETH; THE LORD REVENGETH, AND IS FURIOUS; THE LORD WILL TAKE VENGEANCE ON HIS ADVERSARIES, AND HE RESERVETH WRATH FOR HIS ENEMIES."—*Nahum* i. 1, 2.

THE words suggest two remarks.

I. That THE GREAT SINS OF A PEOPLE MUST EVER BRING UPON THEM GREAT RUIN. The population of Nineveh was pre-eminently wicked. It is represented in the Scriptures as a "bloody city," a "city full of lies and robberies;" its savage brutality to captives is betrayed

in its own monuments, and the Hebrew prophets dwell upon its impious haughtiness and ruthless fierceness (Isa. x. 7, 8). In this book we have its "burden," that is, its sentence, its doom; and the doom is terrible beyond description. It is ever so. Great sins bring great ruin. It was so with the antediluvians, with the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. It was so with the Jews in the time of Titus. Thirty-seven years after the crucifixion of our Lord, the Roman general with a numerous army laid siege to their city and converted it into a scene of the greatest horrors ever witnessed on this earth. The principle of moral causation and the Eternal Justice of the universe demand that wherever there is sin there shall be

suffering; and in proportion to the amount of sin shall be the amount of suffering. "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."

The words suggest,—

II. That the great ruin that comes upon great sinners PRESENTS GOD TO THE "VISION" OF MAN AS TERRIBLY INDIGNANT. "God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth, and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserveth wrath for His enemies." The passions of man are here ascribed to God. In this form of speech the Eternal Spirit is often represented in the Bible as having feet, hands, ears, mouth; but as He has none of these, neither has He any of these passions. It is only when terrible anguish comes upon the sinner that God *appears* to the observer as indignant. The God here was the God who only appeared in the "vision" of Nahum:—the God as He appeared to a man of limited capacity and imperfect character. Jesus *alone* saw the absolute God. "No man hath seen God at any time, but the Only Begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father." The God of Jesus of Nazareth had no jealousy, no vengeance, no fury. He was Love. "Fury is not in Me, saith the Lord." If God has anger, it is the anger of principle, not passion—the anger of love, not malevolence. It is indeed but another form of love: love opposing and crushing whatever is repugnant to the virtue and the happiness of the universe.

• CONCLUSION.—Beware of sin. Ruin must follow it. "Be sure your sins will find you out."

No. CCLVIII.

The Patience of God.

"THE LORD IS SLOW TO ANGER, AND GREAT IN POWER, AND WILL NOT AT ALL ACQUIT THE WICKED."—Nahum i. 3.

THESE words suggest two thoughts concerning God's patience.

I. His patience always implies GREAT POWER. "The Lord is slow to anger and great in power." This is a remarkable expression. It seems as if the prophet meant, God is "slow to anger" because He is "great in power;" if He had less power, He would be less patient. A man may be "slow to anger," slow to deal out vengeance, because he lacks power to do so. But God is "slow to anger" because He has abundance of power. In order to see the power revealed in His forbearance towards sinners in this world, think of four things:—

First: His *exquisite sensibility*. There are some men "slow to anger" because they have not the susceptibility of feeling an insult or offence; their patience, such as it is, is nothing but a natural stoicism. Many men are lauded for their calmness under insults, who are rather to be pitied for their natural insensibility, or denounced for their moral callousness. But the great God is ineffably sensitive. He is sensibility itself. He is love. He feels everything. Every immoral act vibrates on His heart chord; and yet He is "slow to anger." Think on,—

Secondly: His *abhorrence of sin*. It is the "abominable thing" which He emphatically hates. His whole nature re-

volts from it. He feels that it is antagonism to His will, and to the order and well-being of the universe. Think on,—

Thirdly : His *provocation by the world*. Multiply the sins of each man in one day by the countless millions of men that populate the globe; then you will have some conception of the provocation that this God of exquisite sensibility, of an ineffable hatred to sin, receives every day from this planet. One insult often sets man's blood ablaze. Surely, if all the patience of all the angels in heaven were to be embodied in one personality, and that personality were intrusted with the government of this world for one day, before the clock struck the hour of midnight he would set the globe in flames. Think on,—

Fourthly : His *right to do whatever He pleases*. He could show His anger, if He pleased, anywhen, anywhere, or anyhow. He is absolutely irresponsible. He has no one to fear. When men feel anger there are many reasons to prevent them from showing it, but He has no such reason. How great then must be His "power" in holding back His anger. His power of self-control is infinite. "He is slow to anger and of great power." "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

The words suggest,—

II. His patience PRECLUDES NOT THE PUNISHMENT OF THE IMPENITENT. "And will not at all acquit the wicked." That is the impenitent wicked. How-

ever wicked a man is, if he repents he will be acquitted. "Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts," etc.

First: To "acquit" the impenitent, would be an *infraction of His law*. He has bound suffering to sin by a law as strong and as inviolable as that which binds the planets to the sun. "The wages of sin is death." "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Sin leads to ruin, this is a law.

Secondly: To "acquit" the impenitent, would be a *violation of His word*. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God." "Unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." "I will laugh at your calamities, and mock when your fear cometh."

Thirdly: To "acquit" the impenitent, would be to *break the harmony of His universe*. If inveterate rebels and incorrigible sinners were acquitted, what an impulse there would be given in God's moral empire to anarchy and rebellion.

CONCLUSION.—Abuse not the patience of God; nay, avail yourselves of it. While He forbears, and because He forbears; repent! "Why despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

—
No. CCLIX.

God's Power.

"THE LORD HATH HIS WAY IN THE WHIRLWIND AND IN THE STORM, AND THE CLOUDS ARE THE DUST OF HIS FEET. HE REBUKETH THE SEA, AND MAKETH IT DRY, AND DRIETH UP ALL

THE RIVERS: BASHAN LANGUISHETH, AND CARMEL, AND THE FLOWER OF LEBANON LANGUISHETH. THE MOUNTAINS SHAKE AT HIM, AND THE HILLS MELT, AND THE EARTH IS BURNED AT HIS PRESENCE, YEA, THE WORLD, AND ALL THAT DWELL THEREIN. WHO CAN STAND BEFORE HIS INDIGNATION? AND WHO CAN ABIDE IN THE FIERCENESS OF HIS ANGER? HIS FURY IS POURED OUT LIKE FIRE, AND THE ROCKS ARE THROWN DOWN BY HIM.”
—Nahum i. 3-6.

HERE is a description of God's power unrivalled in its sublimity and soul-stirring force. Power belongeth unto God. It is absolute, inexhaustible, ever and everywhere operative. “He fainteth not, neither is weary.” His power is here presented in two aspects.

I. AS OPERATING IRRESISTIBLY IN NATURE.

First: It works in the *air*. “The Lord hath His way in the whirlwind and the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet.” He is in the “whirlwind,” and in the “storm,” and has His way in the clouds. As men walk on the dust of the earth, He walketh upon the clouds of heaven. He creates the whirlwind and the storm, He controls the whirlwind and the storm, He uses the whirlwind and the storm. “He maketh the clouds His chariot and rideth upon the wings of the wind.” He awakes the tornado, He forges the thunder-bolts and He kindles the lightnings.

Secondly: It works in the *sea*. “He rebuketh the sea and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers.” There is undoubtedly an allusion here to the Red Sea and the Jordan. “He holdeth the winds in His fists, and the waters in the

hollow of His hands.” His “way is in the sea,” and His “path in the great waters.” The billows that rise into mountains, as well as the smallest wavelets that come rippling softly to the shore, are the creatures of His power and the servants of His will.

Thirdly: It works on the *earth*. “Bashan languisheth, and Carmel and the flower of Lebanon languisheth.” No spots in Palestine were more fruitful than these three: they abounded in vigorous vegetation and majestic forests. But their life and their growth depended on the results of God's power. All the blades in the fields, all the trees in the forest, would languish and wither, did His power cease to operate. Nor is His power less active in the inorganic parts of the world. “The mountains quake at Him and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at His presence, yea, the world and all that dwell therein.” “He looketh on the earth and it trembleth: He toucheth the hills and they smoke.” He piles up the mountains and again makes them a plain; He kindles the volcanoes and quenches them at His pleasure.

God's power is seen in all the phenomena of the material world. How graphically and beautifully is this presented in Psalm civ. The fact that God's power is ever acting in the material universe is (1) The most *philosophic* explanation of all its phenomena. The men who ascribe all the operations of nature to what they call laws, fail to satisfy my intellect. For what are those laws? The fact that God's power is

ever acting is (2) The most *hallowing* aspect of the world we live in. God is in all. "How dreadful is this place; it is none other than the house of God." Walk the earth with reverence. "Take your shoes from off your feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

His power is here presented,—
II. AS IRRESISTIBLY OPPOSED TO THE WICKED. "Who can stand before His indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by Him." The mightiest rocks are but as pebbles in His hands. "He taketh up the isles as a very little thing; He weigheth the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance." His

anger, as we have said, is His determination to crush the wrong; and there is no power in the universe that can thwart Him in this. Who can stand before this? Were all the creatures in the universe to stand up against it, the attempt would be as feeble and as futile as the attempt of a child to turn back the advancing tides with his little rod. Sinner, why attempt to oppose Him? You must submit, either against your will or by your will. If you continue to resist, the former is a necessity. He will break you in pieces like a potter's vessel. The latter is your duty and your interest. Fall down in penitence before Him, yield yourselves to His service, acquiesce in His will, and you are saved.

Biblical Criticism.

Pauline Use of the Words

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. δίκαιον. | 7. δίκη. |
| 2. δικαιοσύνη. | 8. ἀδικία. |
| 3. δίκαιος. | 9. δίκος. |
| 4. δικαίωμα. | 10. ἀδικέω. |
| 5. δικαίωσις. | 11. δικαιοκρισία. |
| 6. δικαίως. | 12. δικαίω. |



RECENT writer of distinguished ability, Mr. Matthew Arnold, referring to the Puritan misconceptions of St. Paul, seems to think it almost impossible now to "make sure of knowing" what his meaning was; and speaks very justly of the need of St. Paul's being entirely *recast*—a need which, many years since, gave rise to the "continuous sense" here submitted. Indeed this acute essayist, notwithstanding his clear apprehension of Righteousness as at

the foundation of St. Paul's teaching, ingeniously misunderstands many passages, through his despairing, as it would seem, of a natural sense. Certainly it is necessary to approach St. Paul as a teacher of sacred truth with the conviction that he is never unreasonable; and nothing is so likely to mislead as to admit what are termed "mystical" senses in the first instance. If there be any who recoil from exactness, they of course are not here referred to. It is simply taken for granted in the ensuing pages, as before, that the Apostle deals truthfully with the fact of our moral nature. His meaning in most of his Epistles, and doubtless in that to the Romans, must depend on the sense assigned to the words at the head of this article. Probably no one would have thought of any other than a purely moral sense for any of them, but for the fact that the verb *δικαίω* has acquired what in the social system is called a *forensic* sense; of which forensic sense some consideration is first necessary.

When any one is accused in a court of law, it is for a supposed offence against the law as law, and not against morals as morals. If there be in certain cases an accusation made, the substance of which is moral, yet it is made on the belief that the immorality in question is against the law of the state, and it is proceeded with in court on the ground of illegality. Of course it might happen that a moral offence might be evident, and yet that it would not be a legal offence; and if a man were put on trial for it, his acquittal would be no moral but only a legal acquittal. But acquittal is the same thing in the eye of the law, whatever be the quality of the accusation. So also we have the Hebrew, *וְהַצִּדִּיק* Dent. xxv. 1. Simple acquittal, then, is what is meant by forensic justification. It might happen that a tribunal might be so imperfect that acquittal before it would be a perversion of the whole object of the law. Or, the law itself might be so imperfect, that conviction would be difficult or impossible even before a good tribunal. But if a tribunal were conceived of as perfect, and the law as perfect, it would seem that acquittal would be a just clearing of the accused from a charge, and restoring him to the *status*

quo ante. It could not of itself, however, morally raise the man. He is what he was. A perfect tribunal would do legal justice and acquit the innocent; but could not confer goodness. It would seem from all this, that acquittal, or forensic justification, aims, even among men, at justice, or else it is in the highest degree immoral and unworthy. To justify forensically or to condemn forensically, apart from justice, would therefore be alike impossible in the supreme administration of the moral system of that Judge of all the earth Who must do right. Apart altogether from the further reflection, that it is debasing to our conception of God's government to suppose that it derives form or character from the merely technical proceedings of a human court which might judge man arbitrarily or immorally, it is evident, if we admit the parallel, that forensic administration of law among men aims at being an administration of real justice—that is, fundamentally moral in intention. We cannot conceive of law, even among ourselves, as ultimately defiant of "right" *per se*.

The idea of Pardon which enters so mysteriously into the moral relations of man to man, and has not received that attention from ethical philosophy which its importance demands, and is so divinely displayed in the mediation of our Lord, cannot be identified with acquittal or forensic justification. If it were so, indeed, there would be little difficulty in reconciling the views of Cardinal Bellarmine and Bishop Davenant. What the Apostle to the Romans sublimely speaks of as the "forbearance of God" (Rom. ii. 4, 25) is described by the words *πάρεσις* and *ἀνοχή* and manifests the Divine *δικαιοσύνη*, not man's acquittal, but the very opposite, viz., his surrender of the hope of acquittal, and resort to pardon, and an ensuing gift of grace. No one, indeed, in this controversy would now regard the term "forensic justification" as equivalent to pure forgiveness, or be content to take "acquittal" and "pardon" as interchangeable terms. We are *δικαιοῦμενοι* by a Divine gift, *δωρεάν*, obtained for us through the death and resurrection of our Lord, and really imparted to us; otherwise it were no gift at all. To attempt to read "pardon," or

"acquit," in any of the passages where St. Paul uses the verb δικαιώω would throw us off the whole line of his meaning, and be irreconcilable in every case with the context. However difficult or imperfect the rendering of this verb may seem at first in the continuous sense,—and it is earnestly hoped that it will hereafter be made much clearer,—yet the moral connection has always been resolutely sought for, and, it is trusted, not in vain.

It might suffice then at this point to say that the verb δικαιώω cannot by any possibility mean, before God or man, merely to "acquit," or clear from formal blame or accusation, nor intend anything so poor and immoral, so provisional and confessedly imperfect, as *forensically to clear of a charge*. For in fact it could not matter primarily in the moral system whether an accused person were acquitted or not; the moral question would be, Was he really culpable? If he were so, the question "whether he would be pronounced *legally escaped*," would be of only secondary consequence.

But we will now note the use in St. Paul of each of the moral terms enumerated at the head of these remarks.

I. Τὸ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΝ

Occurs in the five following places of our Apostle:—

1. *Eph.* vi. 1.—"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is *right*" (δικαίον—*i.e.*, *morally* right, and not legally only).

2. *Phil.* i. 7.—"Even as it *is meet* (δικαίον) for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the Gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace" (*i.e.*, it is *morally* right, not, of course, legally).

3. *Phil.* iv. 8.—"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are *just* (δικαία), whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (*i.e.*, without doubt, "think on the *morally* right).

4. *Col.* iv. 1.—"Masters, give unto your servants that which

is *just* (δικαιον) and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven" (i.e., morally right).

5. 2 Thess. i. 6.—"Seeing it is a *righteous thing* (δικαιον) with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you." (This could not possibly mean formally, for it is *intrinsically* right.)

In all these places the meaning is purely moral. The term describes the *principle* which is at the foundation, morally, of all God's dealings with man (as in the passage last referred to), and man's with God or with his fellow-man (as in the rest).

II. Ἡ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ

Occurs in the following instances in connection with God:—

1. Rom. i. 17.—"For therein is the *righteousness of God* revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (It is impossible to say that this is merely "legal," for it is the character of God that is referred to.)

2. Rom. iii. 5, 21, 22, 25, 26.—"But if our *unrighteousness* commend the *righteousness of God*, what shall we say? Is God *unrighteous* Who taketh vengeance?" (*Idem.*)

3. "But now the *righteousness of God* without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets."

4. "Even the *righteousness of God* which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference." (Here the *righteousness*, of course, is equitable, real, and indeed Divine.)

5. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare *His righteousness* for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."

6. "To declare, I say, at this time *His righteousness*: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

7. Rom. ix. 28.—"For He will finish the work, and cut it short in *righteousness*: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth."

8. Rom. x. 3 (*twice*).—"For they being ignorant of *God's righteousness*, and going about to establish their own *righteous-*

ness, have not submitted themselves unto the *righteousness* of God." (The idea of "acquittal" as the sense of δικαιοσύνη is absolutely impossible in all these cases, as any will perceive who will attempt to substitute the one thought for the other.)

9. 1 Cor. i. 30 (*double sense*).—"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and *righteousness*, and sanctification, and redemption." (Here "sanctification" is added; so that the idea of mere acquittal would clash with the whole scope.)

10. 2 Cor. v. 21 (*double sense*).—"For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the *righteousness of God* in Him." (The antithesis here is to "sin;" the meaning of δικαιοσύνη therefore is the opposite of sin.)

11. Phil. iii. 9 (*double sense*).—"And be found in Him, not having mine own *righteousness*, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the *righteousness which is of God* by faith." (Evidently it is a Divine character found in us, and not mere acquittal, which is here meant.)

In these eleven places the idea is intrinsically moral. The notion indeed of formal or forensic δικαιοσύνη, in relation to the Divine Being, would seem to be blasphemous, if intelligible at all. We are not saying at present what each passage, if rightly translated, would mean; but that it is the *inward nature* and constant character of God which alone can be understood in any of these places by δικαιοσύνη.

The following are the texts in the same epistles where δικαιοσύνη is used in relation to man:—

1. Rom. iv. 3-5, 6, 9, 11 (*twice*), 13, 22.—"For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for *righteousness*."

2. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt."

3. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for *righteousness*."

4. "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth *righteousness* without works."

5. "Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision

only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for *righteousness*."

6. "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the *righteousness* of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that *righteousness* might be imputed unto them also."

7. "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the *righteousness* of faith."

8. "And therefore it was imputed to him for *righteousness*."

9. *Rom. v. 17, 21.*—"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of *righteousness* shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ."

10. "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through *righteousness* unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

11. *Rom. vi. 13, 16, 18, 19, 20.*—"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of *righteousness* unto God."

12. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto *righteousness*?"

13. "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of *righteousness*."

14. "I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to *righteousness* unto holiness."

15. "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from *righteousness*."

16. *Rom. viii. 10.*—"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of *righteousness*."

17. *Rom. ix. 30 (thrice), 31 (twice).*—"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after *righteousness*, have attained to *righteousness*, even the *righteousness* which is of faith."

18. "But Israel, which followed after the law of *righteousness*, hath not attained to the law of *righteousness*."

19. *Rom. x. 3, 4, 5, 6, 10.*—"For they being ignorant of God's *righteousness*, and going about to establish their own *righteousness*, have not submitted themselves unto the *righteousness* of God."

20. "For Christ is the end of the law for *righteousness* to every one that believeth."

21. "For Moses describeth the *righteousness* which is of the law, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them."

22. "But the *righteousness* which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven?"

23. "For with the heart man believeth unto *righteousness*; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

24. *Rom. xiv. 17.*—"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but *righteousness*, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

25. *1 Cor. i. 30.*—"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and *righteousness*, and sanctification, and redemption."

26. *2 Cor. iii. 9.*—"For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of *righteousness* exceed in glory."

27. *2 Cor. v. 21.*—"For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the *righteousness* of God in Him."

28. *2 Cor. vi. 7, 14.*—"By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of *righteousness* on the right hand and on the left."

29. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath *righteousness* with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

30. 2 Cor. ix. 9, 10.—“As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; He hath given to the poor: His *righteousness* remaineth for ever.”

31. “Now He that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your *righteousness*.”

32. 2 Cor. xi. 15.—“Therefore it is no great thing if His ministers also be transformed as the ministers of *righteousness*; whose end shall be according to their works.”

33. Gal. ii. 21.—“I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if *righteousness* come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”

34. Gal. iii. 6, 21.—“Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for *righteousness*.”

35. “Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily *righteousness* should have been by the law.”

36. Gal. v. 5.—“For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of *righteousness* by faith.”

37. Eph. iv. 24.—“And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in *righteousness* and true holiness.”

38. Eph. v. 9.—“For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and *righteousness* and truth.”

39. Eph. vi. 14.—“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of *righteousness*.”

40. Phil. i. 11.—“Being filled with the fruits of *righteousness*, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”

41. Phil. iii. 6, 9.—“Concerning zeal, persecuting the Church; touching the *righteousness* which is in the law, blameless.”

42. “And be found in Him, not having mine own *righteousness*, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the *righteousness* which is of God by faith.”

43. 1 Tim. vi. 11.—“But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after *righteousness*, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.”

44. 2 Tim. ii. 22.—“Flee also youthful lusts: but follow

righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

45. 2 *Tim.* iii. 16.—"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in *righteousness*."

46. 2 *Tim.* iv. 8.—"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of *righteousness*, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

47. *Titus* iii. 5.—"Not by works of *righteousness* which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

48. *Heb.* i. 9.—"Thou hast loved *righteousness* and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

49. *Heb.* v. 13.—"For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of *righteousness*: for he is a babe."

50. *Heb.* vii. 2.—"To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation king of *righteousness*, and after that also king of Salem, which is, king of peace."

51. *Heb.* xi. 7, 33.—"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the *righteousness* which is by faith."

52. "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought *righteousness*, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions."

53. *Heb.* xii. 11.—"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of *righteousness* unto them which are exercised thereby."

In these fifty-three passages there is no instance in which the least notion of a formal, or purely forensic kind can be substituted. In all cases, not even excepting those in the third and fourth chapters to the Romans (referring to the righteousness of Abraham prior to the Law, and to be hereafter considered), the word δικαιοσύνη is used in its strictly moral sense; that is, as implying an inward and habitual

character, such as we term "goodness," formed in man, or given to him to be developed. In such a case as 2 Tim. ii. 22, "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow *righteousness*, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord, out of a pure heart," Calvin himself admits it. As to the passages referring to Abraham, it will perhaps be enough here to say, that no one supposes Abraham to have had forensic *δικαιοσύνη* only,—if, indeed, that idea be not a moral contradiction.

FROM "CHRISTIANITY AS TAUGHT BY ST. PAUL."
BY W. J. IRONS, D.D.

[*The next words to be continued in subsequent articles.*]

The Preacher's Emblematory Helps.

ANCIENT MYTHS: THEIR MORAL MEANINGS.

Books of Reference: Max Müller's "Lectures on Comparative Mythology," Hardy's "Manual of Buddhism," Pritchard's "Analysis of Egyptian Mythology," Coxe's "Mythology of the Aryan Nations," Coxe's "Tales of Ancient Greece," Gladstone's "Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age," Farrar's "Critical History of Free Thought," Keary's "Heroes of Asgard," Canon Kingsley's "Sermons," Ruskin's "Queen of the Air," Sir T. Malory's "Morte d'Arthur," "Bacon's Essays," "Murray's Manual of Mythology."

"Shall we sneer and laugh at all these dreams as mere follies of the heathen? If we do so, we shall not show the spirit of God or the mind of Christ, nor shall we show our knowledge of the Bible."—*Canon Kingsley.*

No. XII.

Kronos; or, The Function of Time.

VERY dim is the outline of Kronos, even on the pages of earliest Greek mythology. The conception of time is quite foreign to the Romans, though, indeed, some students have sought to find resemblances to Saturnus.

So ancient was Kronos that he has no ancestor before his father Uranos, and is himself the parent of Zeus, "the father of gods and men." To prevent a fulfilment of a prophecy, he

had heard from his parents, to the effect that he would be dethroned by one of his offspring, he swallowed his first five children as each one of them came into the world. But his wife saved their sixth child by artfully giving to the devouring parent a stone, swaddled like an infant, which Kronos swallowed, believing he had thus put out of the way the sixth peril to his reign. Meanwhile this sixth infant of the god was carried to the Isle of Crete, and hidden in a cave on Mount Ida. Supernaturally protected and

nourished, Zeus grows to manhood; and then, when all danger of being devoured by his father is over, and that father had moreover, because of an emetic administered to him, brought up (in a very literal sense) his other five children, they form a league against him, seeking to enthrone the sixth child in the place of the unpaternal Kronos. Thus Zeus is established in the seat of Kronos. But other offspring of Uranos, Titanic brethren of Kronos, declare war against Zeus, and boldly wage it for years, till, timely help arriving, Zeus quells it, and casts his enemies into Tartaros. Then the giants, incited by their mother Gara, who was also mother of the insulted and conquered Titans, rise in angry revolution against Zeus. They pile mountains on mountains and rocks on rocks, that they may reach heaven to assail him. He, in angry return, hurls thunderbolts at them. The other deities in the Olympian heaven help him to resist the stormful rebellion. But in vain. Herakles then comes to the aid of Zeus and of the commonwealth of the gods. There is fearful massacre of the rebels. Many are slain; many flung into abysmal chasms where, rocks and hills reeling after them, they are consigned to a life of perpetual imprisonment beneath the earth. New revolutions arise at the instigation of Gara against Zeus. On behalf of the rebels Typhon fights with the fury of a hurricane. All are at length vanquished, and Zeus establishes his right to perpetual rule.

Though the history of Kronos is thus so soon and so com-

pletely gathered up and lost in that of his son Zeus, it is clear he had a definite place in Greek thought. For he is eventually worshipped in Athens and elsewhere as a sort of Harvest god, the maturer and ripener, who, through storm and floods and winter, as well as more genial influences, nourishes and perfects all things. Yet since he devours so much of what he had begotten, and would, if he could, have swallowed all his offspring, and since his story and himself are utterly lost in the conflicts that end in the grand victory of the gods, it is clear that he himself is nothing if not as a preparer for others' glory, a ripener for others' uses, a maturer for others' enjoyment. Is not this the function of all Time? and not only of the seasons that lead up to vegetable harvests; though of the essence of those seasons only Kronos was primarily the personification. Does not the myth illustrate for us about Time, that it is,—

I. MYSTERIOUS. As Kronos was the son of the impenetrable, far-reaching sky, and his origin and his end baffle our thought, so Duration evades our description, eludes our understanding, lost in the eternities, as in infinite azure, as the sum of years, centuries, millenniums. We trace its course as we follow a hoary-headed history; but are soon lost as we go back into the ages of the past. We track its windings as we follow bright-eyed prophecy; but are soon lost as we go forward into the ages of the future. No wonder that almost the dimmest of all Greek myths is the myth of Kronos. For nothing is more obscure to

our finite minds than the processes that seek to bring into a focus "the Course of Time." Poetry may sing of it, but Philosophy cannot analyse it. As for Religion, it teaches men, in the presence of so profound a mystery, to cry, "We are but of yesterday, and know nothing."

II. PROLIFIC. As Kronos and his wife Rhea had many children, so Time, in connection with Creation, produces multitudes of things and of thoughts; of combinations, material, mental, and moral; of institutions that bless or curse; of experiences, good and bad. It has given to us more than we can catalogue. It is ever giving. Every hour is an hour of birth. The result of the contact of each flying moment, whether with mere material creation or with man, is that something is born into the universe. They who are the heirs of the ages have a patrimony ever accumulating, vast beyond computation, varied beyond imagination.

III. DESTRUCTIVE. As Kronos swallowed his offspring, so Time destroyed much that it had given. Time has a tooth that is very ravenous, a scythe that is ever cutting down what had just begun to be, or had lasted long. How much of the beauty of landscapes now desolate, of the pomp of nations now declined, of the genius and manifold glories of men now dead,

"Forgot beneath the funeral pall
of Time."

Nothing that is altogether true and right is ever so destroyed by Time. For as Kronos had to restore his children, and the

divine Zeus was never devoured by him, so Time has to restore what for a while was wrongfully buried. Only the false will perish. Milton well sings to Time:—

"Fly, envious Time, till thou run
out thy race;
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping
hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy
plummet's pace;
And glut thyself with what thy
womb devours,
Which is no more than what is
false and vain,
And merely mortal dross;
So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain."

IV. PREPARATORY. This seems the chief thought of the myth. For Kronos, as god of harvest, ripens and matures every form of life, till in the person of his son Zeus culminates the complete organization and dispensation of all the affairs of the universe. This consummation is arrived at by manifold operations. Kronos takes back what he had given, and gives again what he had taken back. There is terrible struggle among the growing powers of nature. Upheavals and convulsions of earthquakes have their place in the great drama that ends in victory for the right. Many forces have seemed to be counteracting and destroying the influence of each other; but, nevertheless, all are working together to create a higher order of things. And at length Kronos, who seemed at first only the grim god who devoured his own children, is not only regarded as the ripener and perfecter of all things, but is himself lost in the effulgence of Zeus, "god of the light of

heaven," "father of gods and men." So it is with Time. Ripening all human history, working out, through many processes of good and evil, man's destiny; at last, Time as a probation shall be lost in Eternity as a retribution. Milton again gathers our challenge to Time,—

"For when as each thing bad thou
has entombed,
And last of all thy greedy self
consumed,
Then long Eternity shall greet
our bliss
With an individual kiss;
And Joy shall overtake us as a
flood,
When everything that is sincerely
good
And perfectly divine,

With truth, and peace, and love,
shall ever shine
About the supreme throne
Of Him, to whose happy-making
sight alone
When once our heavenly-guided
soul shall climb,
Then, all this earthly grossness
quit,
Attired with stars, we shall for
ever sit,
Triumphing over Death, and
Chance, and thee, O Time."

How completely preparatory to what is yonder and future Time is, we shall only fully know when the angel shall swear "by Him who liveth for ever and ever, that there shall be Time no longer."

URIAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

ORIGINAL SIMILITUDES.

The Preacher.

No man has so admirable an opportunity as the minister to communicate his best thoughts to the public. The politician has his place in the Senate, and speaks twice or thrice in a session on the external interests of men, chiefly busying himself about measures of political economy, and seldom thinking it decorous or "statesmanlike" to appeal to principles of right, or address any faculty deeper than the understanding, or appeal to aught nobler than selfishness. The reformer, the philanthropist, finds it difficult to gather an audience; they come reluctantly, at rare intervals of business or pleasure. But every Sunday custom tolls the bell of time. In the ruts of ancient usage, men ride to the meeting-house, seat them in

venerable pews, while the holiest associations of time and place calm and pacify their spirit, else often careful and troubled about many things, and all are ready for the teacher of religion to address their deepest and their highest powers. Before him lies the Bible—an Old Testament full of prophets and rich in psalms and history, a New Testament crowded with apostles and martyrs; and in the midst thereof stands that great Hebrew Peasant lifting up such a magnificent and manly face. The very hymn the people sing is old and rich with holy memories; the pious breath of father, mother, sister, or, perhaps, some one more tenderly beloved, is immanent therein; and the tune itself comes like the soft wind of summer, which hangs over a

pond full of lilies and then wafts their fragrance to all the little town. Once every week, nay twice a Sunday, his self-gathered audience come to listen and to learn, expecting to be made ashamed of every meanness, vanity, and sin; asking for rebuke, and coveting to be lifted up towards the measure of a perfect man. It is of the loftiest themes he is to treat. Beside all this, the most tender confidence is reposed in him—the secrets of business, the joys of moral worth, the grief of wickedness, the privacy of man's and woman's love, and the heart's bitterness, which else may no man know, often are made known to him. He joins the hands of maidens and lovers, teaching them how to marry each other; he watches over the little children, and in sickness and in sorrow is asked "to soothe, and heal, and bless." Prophets and apostles sought such avenues to men; for him they are already made. Surely, if a man, in such a place, speaking Sunday by Sunday, year out, year in, makes no mark, he must be a fool!—*Theodore Parker.*

Character.

WE have frequently stated that every man is under the sway of some *propensity* or other, whatever it may be; in any case it is evermore the source of character. It is his *moral heart*, out of which are the *issues of his life*. This underlying element of character, like the principle of life in all forms, *assimilates everything to itself*—turns everything into its own essence. Life in the tree turns everything it appropriates into tree; life in the animal turns everything it appropriates into animal. The rose transmutes all into rose; and the vine, all things into vine; the wolf, all things into wolf; and the man, all things into man. It is the principle of life that does this. Now, the primary element of a man's character,—the *controlling disposition*,—acts ever in this way. If that principle be secular, it turns everything into avarice; if religious, it turns everything into religion. Like the sap of the tree, this principle of character runs into every branch of life, produces, shapes, colours, every part.

SCIENTIFIC FACTS AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

"Books of Illustration" designed to help preachers, are somewhat, we think, too abounding. They are often made up to a great extent of anecdotes from the sentimental side of life, and not always having a healthful influence or historic foundation. We find that preachers and hearers are getting tired of such. Albeit illustrations are needed by every speaker who would interest the people, and are sanctioned by the highest authority. Nature itself is a parable. Hence we have arranged with a naturalist who has been engaged in scientific investigation for many years, to supply the *Homilist* with such reliable and well-ascertained facts in nature as cultured and conscientious men may use with confidence, as mirrors of morals and diagrams of doctrines.

The Caribitos: War Orators.

THE Caribitos (*Serrasalmo*) are characinoids, noted in all the

warm districts of Africa for their bloodthirstiness. Their haunts are at the bottom of rivers; but a few drops of blood

suffice to bring them by thousands to the surface; and Humboldt mentions that in some parts, where the water was perfectly clear and no fish were visible, he could in a few minutes bring together a cloud of Caribitos by casting in some bits of flesh.

We have a class of speakers in this country who are silent on all great social and cosmopolitan topics, but make themselves heard and felt the moment any matter of warlike fascination comes to the surface. All other questions float down the stream of public opinion without causing them even to indicate their existence. But let a question involving blood appear, and with marvellous celerity all these pugilistic men come from the obscurity of barracks, Service clubs, and from no one knows where, often fuming about no one knows what. They remind one of the *Caribitos*.

The Black Rhinoceros: The Absurdity of Passion.

THE black rhinoceroses, says W. C. Anderson, are subject to sudden paroxysms of unprovoked fury, rushing and charging with inconceivable fierceness animals, stones, and bushes; in short, every object that comes in their way. Gordon Cumming describes them as often ploughing up the ground for several yards with their horns, and assaulting large bushes in the most violent manner. On these bushes they work for hours with their horns, at the same time snorting and blowing loudly; nor do they leave them in general until they have broken them to pieces.

There is a passion which is the result of adequate causes, and there is a blind, brutal-like passion. We see men under the influence of the latter furious without a cause, and, with great waste of power, scattering injuries around upon perfectly inoffensive objects. These passionate men are invited to look at these black rhinoceroses, and set them up as their models, or their monitors, whichever they in their judgment may deem more wise.

The Laplander: The Effects of Climate on Intellect and Morals.

THE Laplander inhabits the northernmost coasts of the Scandinavian peninsula. They are ignorant, uncultivated, and torpid rather than savage. In spite of their frequent contact with the Russians and the Swedes, they have no industrial resources, no art, no other commerce than that which is afforded by the products of the chase, of their fisheries, or their herds of reindeer. Christianity, to which they were converted about two centuries ago, has not aroused them as yet from their moral and intellectual lethargy. All religion being reduced, so far as they are concerned, to oral tradition, the devotion of each is in proportion to his memory. Education among them has attained to this standard, that a Laplander who knows his alphabet, corresponds to a young man among us who has graduated at Oxford or Cambridge.

It may startle to declare that the intellect and even the mo-

rality of peoples have hitherto been wonderfully affected by climate. But so it is, as will be seen by the case of the Laplanders. —

The Opossum: The Impostor.

If the opossum is surprised by the farmer "*flagrante delicto*,"

it lies down on the ground, counterfeits death, and takes any amount of beating without wincing; but as soon as the man, thinking that he has killed it, turns his back, the rogue decamps as fast as he can, and regains the forest.

How like is this to the sleek, sanctimonious impostor.

Homiletical Breviaries.

No. CCLXI.

A Significant Voice from Heaven.

"I AM JESUS OF NAZARETH."—*Acts* xxii. 8.

CHRIST was in heaven when He spoke those words, and they were addressed to Saul on his way to Damascus.* Nazareth was the early home of Jesus. Though not born there, yet there He was brought up. He was known as "Jesus of Nazareth." No less than twenty-one times in the New Testament is He so designated. There are three facts suggested by these few words, which Christ spoke to Saul of Tarsus. I. That a change of worlds does not destroy the PERSONAL IDENTITY OF MAN. Christ had died, passed through the grave, ascended to heaven, and had been in the glories of that region now for some time, and yet He says, "I am Jesus of Nazareth;" I am the same Being that was brought up in Nazareth. Christ, in His glorified body, felt that He was the same Person as He Who grew to manhood and worked at His trade in Nazareth. "He that descended is the same also that ascended." Sublimely encouraging to us is it, that Jesus, who was here on earth, so full of tenderness and love, is the same Jesus now in heaven. Nor does the change of worlds destroy the identity of men. Abraham is the same as when he dwelt in the tents of Mamre; Moses, as when he confronted Pharaoh; David, as when he grappled with Goliath, etc., etc. A man once, a man for ever. Conscious personality will always be preserved. The words sug-

* See "Homiletical Commentary on the Acts," page 376.

gest, II. That great natures are NEVER ASHAMED OF THEIR ORIGIN, HOWEVER HUMBLE. "Jesus of Nazareth!" "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Nazareth was one of the most despised localities in Galilee. It was locally and socially insignificant, and morally degraded. And yet Jesus is not ashamed of it in heaven. It was sacred to His memory. There lived His parents, there His young nature opened itself to the influences of nature and of God. There are those by millions on earth who rise from humble places and circumstances into the higher social scenes, and who are ashamed of their origin. These, however socially great they may become, are but miserable pigmies in the universe. No great souls will ever be ashamed of their father's house, however humble or obscure. Christ, though amidst the highest aristocracy of the Creator, was not ashamed of His origin. III. That the meanest spots on earth, when they become the SCENES OF HOLY LIVES, ARE FAMOUS IN THE UNIVERSE. Nazareth was the scene of our Saviour's early life. There He received His first moral impressions, there He studied and prayed. The scenes of holy impression and worship are hallowed in the imagination of the devout worshipper; they are ever fragrant and beautiful in memory. Nazareth became famous in the Divine empire. Amidst the innumerable hosts of celestial intelligences, He Who is the centre, the glory, and the moral Master of them all says, "I am Jesus of Nazareth." No doubt sainted men talk of the varied scenes of their earthly life in the upper spheres of being.

No. CCLXII.

The Eye and Heart of Christ.

"WHY PERSECUTEST THOU ME."—*Acts xxii. 7.*

Two thoughts are suggested by these remarkable words. I. That Christ in heaven observes individual MEN ON EARTH. His eye was on Saul of Tarsus now. Little did the persecutor know that He whom he hated, whose disciples he sought to destroy, and whose name he endeavoured to blot from the earth, knew all about him—not only marked his every footstep, but saw his every passing thought and feeling. That the great God knows all about the life and conduct of the *individual* man, is obvious. First: *From the omniscience of His nature.* He who sees all things sees each thing,—the minute as well as the vast. Secondly: *From the history of mankind.* Hagar in the wilderness, Jacob at Bethel,

Elijah in the cave, and now Saul on his way to Damascus. Thirdly: *From the teachings of the Bible.* (See Ps. cxxxix.; Prov. xv. 3; Heb. iv. 13.) This solemn fact should make us serious, circumspect, devout. II. Christ in heaven FEELS ONE WITH HIS DISCIPLES ON EARTH. "Why persecutest thou me?" What does this mean? Personally Christ was in the heavens, beyond the reach of mortals. It means that so dear are His disciples to His heart, that their sufferings are His. He bears their infirmities and carries their sorrows, even in heaven. They are "members of His body," and no part can be wounded without quivering to the sensorium. (See Matt. xxv. 40, 45, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these.")

No. CCLXIII.

God and Man.

"EVERY ONE OF US SHALL GIVE ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF TO GOD."—
Romans xiv. 12.

THESE words lead us to make a remark or two upon God and man. I. UPON GOD. First: The *personal existence* of God is implied. The "account" is to be given, not to matter, not to law, not to fate, not to the *all*, but to God, a person. The idea of rendering an account to a thing, however vast and mighty, is as absurd as to render it to nothing. God is a *personality* more distinct from the universe than the builder is from the superstructure. He has personal consciousness, personal spontaneity, etc. Secondly: The *universal supremacy* of God is implied. He has an authority, not over one man, but "every one." His authority is absolute, it is not merely that of a father or king, but of a Creator and Proprietor. "All souls are His." Thirdly: The *particular inspection* of God is implied. If He holds every one accountable, He must know every one. "God is too great to take cognizance of individual concerns of individual men," says the Deist; but He would be no God at all where He not to do so. To the Infinite there can be no little or no great. God's eye is upon every man. He understands our thoughts afar off. "There is nothing hid from the Lord." These words lead us to make a remark,—II. UPON MAN. Man is individually responsible for all that he is, for all that he has, for all that he does, and for all that he purposes doing. This shows—First: The *freedom of his mind*. He is the author of his own acts. His own consciousness attests this

Were he not, he could feel neither self-remorse nor self-commendation. This shows, Secondly: The *solemnity of his existence*. There is a day of reckoning awaiting him, a day of balancing his moral accounts. He is not the proprietor of what he calls his own, but the mere trustee. He is bound to do whatever he does to the Glory of God.

My Ministry at Stockwell.

(Continued from page 398.)

THE difficulties I encountered in endeavouring to obtain the necessary number of practical adherents to this scheme were numerous and varied. They often baffled and oppressed me. There was, for example, the utter lack in the public mind of any conviction as to the immense power and corrupting character of existing journals. At that time, the great bulk even of the reading public seldom saw a daily newspaper; and those who scanned its columns felt no responsibility concerning the immense influence it was exerting on the character and destiny of the nation. Still less, of course, would those who seldom, if ever, read a newspaper have any sympathy or interest with the movement. They regarded journalism as lying altogether far beyond their domain. This indifferentism had to be broken, and public sentiment had to be created. This was hard work, and required hard reasoning and burning rhetoric. Often have I appeared before audiences to discuss the question, in which many regarded me as a madman, and treated my mission with scoffs and jeers; and all that could be gained from others was something like the promise of Felix to Paul: "Go thy way for this time, and when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." There was, again, the dread of joint-stock companies. At the time I embarked in the enterprise, the "Royal British Bank,"—a joint-stock undertaking,—had broken down, bringing ruin upon most of the shareholders. The columns of the newspapers were full of the records of the swindlings of the undertaking, and the terrible disasters upon most of its members. And although the *Dial* undertaking was registered under the Limited Liability Act which had just passed, it was no easy task so to convince men that they were only responsible for the shares they had subscribed as to induce them to write their names upon the

Deed of Settlement. Had the English people been then as acquainted with joint-stock companies as they are now, and as well assured of the protection that the Limited Liability Act affords, the amount of labour put forth to win 10,000 shareholders would have won ten times the number. My deep conviction is, that were the enterprise started now, it would be a comparatively easy thing to obtain the necessary number of shareholders and amount of capital. There was, moreover, the prevalence of *sect* life in the country. The enterprise was purely undenominational and national, appealing to man, not as the limb of a sect, but as a citizen of the country and a member of the race. Hence sectarians everywhere shunned it. The sects, I have found, will only love their own. The divinest things outside their narrow pale they will drag to the cross. The sect men of all denominations, like the elder son in the gospel, were "angry," and refused to "go in." I never was much of a denominational man; but this "*Dial*" experience burnt out whatever of that miserable thing was in my nature. *Sect* life I regard as one of the leading devils of England, contracting human sympathies, creating bigots, and obstructing the true progress of the nation. Amongst many painful developments of this which I met with, was a clandestine effort put forth by three men, two of whom were directors, to shake faith in the movement by distributing circulars amongst the shareholders, with the view of showing that my purpose was to make *The Dial* a Church paper. I attempted, not only in deference to the large number of clergymen and Churchmen who had joined the movement, but because it was more expressive, to substitute in the circular the words, the "promotion of the rights of conscience" for the clause, the "promotion of religious equality." On account of this, a general meeting of the shareholders had to be convened; and a large gathering assembled at Radley's Hotel, on the 1st of July, 1858. The room was crowded. I was chairman; and the whole hot day was spent in hot discussion. Whilst the three sectarian mischief-makers were beaten into humiliation, and a vote of confidence in me carried by the meeting, not a little injury was done to the undertaking by the unfounded suspicion awakened in the country. Then there was the *newspaper interest*. No sooner did the enterprise promise success, than nearly all the journals took alarm; every dog howled in his kennel. It is only fair to say, however, that whilst nearly all the curs grinned and yelped, the St. Bernard of journalism maintained a dignified silence. None were more fierce than

the so-called religious journals. The more religious their professions, the more canine their snarl. Some of them through snarling have barked themselves out long ago. Being not only the originator and chairman of the movement, but the chief advocate, I was the object of attack of some paper or papers every week for several years. The scheme was ridiculed, the speeches misrepresented, and the promoters held up to suspicion. This, it must be seen, was a very formidable difficulty, and one which, in my innocence, I did not anticipate in starting. I certainly had expected that all the papers which professed to be animated with the honest, the philanthropic, and the Christian, such as *The Nonconformist*, *The Patriot*, *The Banner*, *The Record*, *The Watchman*, would have joined heartily in my endeavour. But no; like Demetrius the silversmith, they seemed to say to each other, "Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth." Then there was the rampancy of the mercenary feeling. The *Dial* movement was philanthropic rather than mercantile; yet mercenary spirits joined it in a goodly number. Some of them cried out for their dividends, others struggled for remunerative offices. Some pressed to be agents; some, to be directors; some, managers; but all with the view of getting gain. They hovered over the funds like hungry eagles over a dead carcase. Much of my time was taken up in beating the vultures back.

The last difficulty I shall mention, was the scarcity of truly able men in all communities, who would heartily enter into a movement for doing good for its own sake. To work out a great and good idea, one must have great and good men. Little men cannot take in a great idea. Still less can they fairly represent it: if they talk or write about it, they will bring it into disgrace. And bad men have not that sympathy with it that will secure an honest service.

I was an enthusiast in the movement; hence those towering difficulties rather stimulated than disheartened me. I addressed meetings in nearly all the large towns in England and in many of the small ones too; also in London, not a few.

Through *The Homilist* I found many clergymen and unsectarian ministers of every denomination ready to welcome me wherever I went. In some cases, clergymen of the Established Church met me at the station and conducted me to their homes. Indeed, had it not been for *The Homilist* as my forerunner, the marvellous success would never have been achieved. I say marvellous, for indeed it was so.

Men, famous in many departments, soon began to join me.

Amongst clergymen and ministers, were Canons Clarke, Gray, and Robinson; W. F. Wilkinson, M.A., and W. Webster, M.A., authors of the Greek Testament which bears their name; Dr. John Harris, author of "Pre-Adamite Earth" and many celebrated works, the Principal of New College, London; Professor Harley, Head Master of Mill Hill; Dr. Lewis Edwards, Principal of Bala College; Dr. Spence, of the Poultry Chapel; Thomas Binney, D.D.; Rev. John Burnett; Dr. Landels; J. and A. Mursell; Professor Newth, LL.D., of New College, London; Morley Punshon, LL.D.; George W. Conder, Gervase Smith; W. Rees, D.D., of Liverpool; Dr. Rutherford, of Newcastle; Dr. Parker, of the City Temple; Dr. Alliott, Principal of Cheshunt College. Many well-known business men and firms in the provinces also joined. Amongst them were Sir Titus Salt, of Saltaire; Jacob Bright, M.P. (who with me canvassed the town of Rochdale for adherents); E. T. Gourley, M.P.; Crossleys, of Halifax; Corys, of Cardiff; Richards, of Swansea; Robertsons, of Liverpool; Mark Whitwell, Chairman of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce; R. F. Bagshaw, M.P.; Samuel Bowly, of Gloucester, and Sir James Watts, of Manchester.

The progress of the movement was now noticed in the House of Lords in a speech by Earl Granville, on the 14th of March, 1856, in which he said, "With regard to parties forming themselves into joint-stock companies for the purpose of establishing newspapers, I must say that such an object appears to me to be most legitimate, and that it will be most creditable in parties thus to combine for the purpose of enlightening the public mind."

The authorities of the City of London, and others connected with its interests, began now to join me. I was invited to dine with the Corporation of the City of London, and after the dinner, Sir Robert Carden, the President, proposed my health in a most hearty way. In responding, I took the opportunity of expounding my scheme; and a large number of the company then and there identified themselves with the movement. Alderman and Sheriff Sir Warren Stormes Hale, Alderman and Sheriff Edward Conder, Alderman Challis, Frederick Woodthorpe, the Town Clerk, Sir Charles Reed, Sheriff Cockerell, and Mr. Sheridan, M.P., were amongst the number. Nor should I forget here to mention the cordial co-operation of the Chamberlain of the City of London, Chamberlain Benjamin Scott, who attended some meetings and advocated the cause. On one occasion, speaking of the *Dial* movement (as reported in *The Dial Register*, November, 1857), he said, in somewhat of the Mansion House style of eloquence, "I believe the idea

to be the most important which has occurred to the human mind in recent times." He also added, "For Mr. Thomas, I desire that he may live to see some of the good he has originated. When civilization shall have taken its flight to the antipodes; when the nations of Europe shall have been broken in pieces; when Macaulay's New Zealander shall sketch the ruins of St. Paul's from the broken arches of London Bridge, some trans-Atlantic or trans-Pacific historian will record that the great social revolution which taught men to use for themselves and for righteousness the power of the press, originated in the mind of David Thomas, of Stockwell."

With the accession of men like these, the task of enrolling shareholders became less difficult; and bankers, magistrates, manufacturers, and merchants of high standing in their respective localities were added to the roll. Nor must I forget how cordially the professional classes joined our ranks. Mr. Macready, the eminent actor (whose diary has recently been read with such profound interest); Mr. Henry Vincent, the renowned lecturer, and Mr. George Thompson, late M.P. for the Tower Hamlets, whom Lord Brougham pronounced the "greatest orator of the age," and who did as much perhaps towards the repeal of the Corn Laws as any man in England. He canvassed the country on the occasion with Richard Cobden and John Bright, wrought self-denyingly and hard, his colleagues reaping all the glory and the reward. It is a disgrace to the men of England that something has not been done to recognise the philanthropic labours of this distinguished man.

Of physicians and counsel I have also a happy recollection. Among many of the former were Dr. Shepherd Symes, Dr. Graf Von Viethoff, Dr. R. B. Grindrod, Dr. Thomas Williams, Lecturer at St. Thomas's Hospital. Among many of the latter were Sir Thomas Chambers, Q.C., M.P., Common Serjeant for the City of London; Woodthorpe Brandon, Deputy Judge of the Lord Mayor's Court; the learned Recorder of Bolton; and the learned Recorder of Carmarthen. Nor should my son's name be omitted here from any false delicacy,—David Morgan Thomas, of the Western circuit,—who by his keen intellect, sound judgment, ready reasoning, stirring rhetoric, and business aptitudes rendered the movement incalculable service at various times.

That all the accounts of the company should bear the strictest investigation, care was taken to select auditors in whom universal confidence could be placed. They were Messrs. Turquand of Old Jewry, and Edward Carlile, Esq., of Bow

Lane and Clapham Park. The latter joined the movement at the outset, and remained faithful to the last.

The enrolment of such names as have been mentioned is certainly an answer to those small-brained and inflated men, abounding in every district, who from the commencement declared the movement Utopian, and spoke of me as a visionary. Let those little creatures stand side by side with the merchants, physicians, lawyers, ministers, authors, enrolled on our list, and they will appear as swallows to eagles.

Thus the enterprise grew into a great power. I obtained 10,000 shareholders, and a nominal capital of £240,000—a literary achievement never before accomplished in the history of the world. With every prospect of accomplishing all our hopes, circumstances arose which commenced its downfall, and to these I am now about to refer.

(To be continued.)

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

SERMONS PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, AND ON VARIOUS OCCASIONS. By J. B. MOZLEY, D.D. London: Rivingtons & Co.

Six of these sermons were preached before the University of Oxford: the others were delivered in the Cathedral of Worcester, in Christ Church, and Lancing College. The subjects are: The Roman Consul, The Pharisees, Eternal Life, Reversal of Human Judgment, War, Nature, The Work of the Spirit, The Atonement, The Duty to Equals, Peaceful Temper, The Strength of Wishes, The Unspoken Judgment of Mankind, The True Test of Spiritual Birth, The Ascension-Day, Gratitude, The Principle of Emulation, Religion, The First Choice, and The Influence of Dogmatic Teaching upon Education.

These are not sermons in a conventional sense; they are free, to a great extent, from orthodox peculiarities and from popular theological dogmas, free also from the phraseology, declamation, and rhapsody of modern pulpits. They are discourses on Biblical subjects by a singularly able-minded man of extensive culture and affluent imagination, to learned

and thoughtful men. They have already had a very flattering welcome from some of our contemporaries. In that greeting we are able heartily to join. For though we may miss that systematic treatment of the verses, taken as texts, for which we are accustomed to look, and at which we aim in our endeavours to deal with the Holy Scriptures inductively, we nevertheless find so much fresh, suggestive, and stimulating thought here, that very cordially commends the book to our readers. There is the proper courage in the treatment both of Doctrinal subjects, such as "The Atonement," and "The Work of the Spirit on the Natural Man," and of practical subjects, such as "Our Duty to Equals," "The Peaceful Temper," "Gratitude," etc. Besides long passages of well-knit reasoning, there are others of keen sympathy and glowing fervour. There are philosophical analyses of familiar but often unexplained processes of thought, as in the sermon on "Nature," where Dr. Mozley opens up the manifold reasons of human enjoyment of awe, and shows that there will be the full satisfaction of that enjoyment in God only; and, as in the sermon on "The Reversal of Human Judgment," where he incidentally shows "That deep concern for human souls would never have produced spiritual despotism or persecution: it was a selfish relation to truth, to begin with, which produced these: it was the lapse of the human heart from charity to pride in the matter." And scattered up and down the pages are trenchant sentences in which some truth cleaves one's conscience like a true Damascus blade, or is written on one's memory as with the pen of a diamond. Unlike them in many respects, and inferior in some, this book may well be a companion volume to Bushnell and Channing, and even the peerless Robertson. As a specimen of the Author's thinking and style, we give the following extract from the discourse on the Atonement:—

"There is a kind of *substitution* involved in the Scriptural doctrine of the Atonement, and a true kind; but it is not a literal, but a moral kind of substitution. It is one person suffering on behalf of another, for the sake of another; in that sense he takes the place and acts in the stead of another; he suffers that another may escape suffering; he condemns himself to a burden that another may be relieved. But this is the moral substitution which is inherent in acts of love and labour for others; it is a totally different thing from the literal substitution of one person for another in punishment. The outspoken witness in the human heart, which has from the beginning embraced the doctrine of the Atonement with the warmth of religious affection, has been indeed a better judge on the moral question than particular formal schools of theological philosophy. The atoning act of the Son, as an act of love on behalf of sinful man, appealed to wonder and praise: the effect of the act in changing the regards of the Father towards the sinner, was only the representation, in the sublime and ineffable region of mystery, of an effect which men recognised in their own minds. The human heart accepts mediation. It does not understand it as a whole; but the fragment of which it is conscious is enough to defend the doctrine upon the score of morals."

LIFE, LETTERS, AND JOURNALS OF GEORGE TICKNOR. VOLS. I. & II.
London: Sampson, Low, & Marston, Fleet Street.

These volumes are a record of the life and writings of a very distinguished American. Much is autobiographic. He was a man of great natural ability, amazing stores of rare information, and of immense influence in the world of science and literature. The volumes introduce us not only into the domain of his own mental and spiritual life, but into the presence of some of the most illustrious societies, scholars, scientists, and sages of America and Europe. "These volumes consist so much of the writings of him who is their subject, that his opinions and qualities are perhaps as fairly shown as they were even in intimate intercourse, and uniting these more personal and private compositions with his published works, his intellectual gifts are made apparent. That he appreciated wit and imagination, without possessing them in large measure; and that his taste in the Fine Arts was that of a healthy, quick intelligence, carefully trained by observation, rather than a spontaneous instinct, will be seen without disparagement. As a student of character, he was vigilant, thoughtful, and kindly; his recorded judgments of persons being very rarely pointed by a severe remark of any sort; or, if any severity is found in his letters and journals, it is sure to rest on some moral ground. He was not disposed to be satirical, though he was sometimes stern, and his principle was always to weigh his judgments carefully and to be just. If, however, he had noted a fact in the career or the character of a man, which distinctly indicated a moral want in his nature, he never forgot it."

MESSIANIC PROPHECY. ITS ORIGIN, HISTORICAL CHARACTER, AND RELATION TO NEW TESTAMENT FULFILMENT. By DR. EDWARD RIEHM. TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY REV. JOHN JEFFERSON. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

An extract from the Author's preface will indicate the character of this book. "From the most various quarters the wish has been frequently expressed, that the three articles on Messianic Prophecy, written by me for *Studien und Kritiken* in the years 1865 and 1869, should be made accessible to a wider circle by being published in a separate volume. It has come too from men whose judgment I could not fail to respect, partly on account of their superior acquaintance with the subject and its existing literature, and partly because their wishes assured me that my desire to contribute something towards the reconciliation of contradictory principles in the sphere of the Old Testament interpretation had not been altogether in vain. I hesitated, however, to accede to their requests, in the hope that the essential contents of the articles might find a place in a larger work on Old Testament theology; but being compelled by other literary responsibilities to postpone for some time the execution of that work, the continued demand for the articles, sustained as it was by favouring circumstances, led me to decide upon their separate publication.

Since the appearance of the first two articles, I have five times delivered lectures on Prophecy and Messianic Prediction, and again considered in special discourses every Messianic Scripture in detail; and I have cherished the hope of being able to recast the work, so that, with respect to Messianic prophecy itself, it should be more comprehensive and complete, while at the same time the exegetical results would have been more firmly established. But this also I was constrained to give up, not entirely however for the reason that it required more time than I had at my disposal, but because its accomplishment demanded essential changes in the distribution and arrangement of the material, and the result would have been, not the republication of the original articles, but the issue of a new work."

Although we think the Author sees the Messiah in passages which have no reference whatever to Him, we consider his work a valuable contribution to sacred exegesis.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY ON THE PROPHECIES OF EZEKIEL. By C. F. KEIL, D.D. TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY REV. JAMES MARTIN, B.A. VOLS. I. & II. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 38, George Street.

We have frequently called the attention of our readers to certain expositions of the distinguished Author. We are right glad to welcome these two volumes of his on Ezekiel. The same rich scholarship, keen discrimination, thorough research, profound inquiry, are as manifest in these volumes as in his other works. Our readers will of course procure these two books.

CLEFTS OF THE ROCK; OR, THE BELIEVER'S GROUNDS OF CONFIDENCE IN CHRIST. By J. R. MACDUFF, D.D., London: J. Nisbet & Co.

MEMORIES OF BETHANY. By DR. MACDUFF. London: J. Nisbet & Co., 21, Berners Street.

We do not wonder that Dr. Mac Duff's works have obtained such a large circulation. They not only agree in sentiment with popular theology, but they glow with spiritual sympathy, are redolent with devout suggestions, and abound with striking imagery. He comes within the reach of every man's understanding, and touches every man's experience at some point or other.

CLEFTS OF THE ROCK consists of seventeen discourses on Christ. We need not recommend the work; it is sure to have a circulation equal to the Author's other productions.

MEMORIES OF BETHANY. A work that has obtained the enormous circulation of forty-three thousand, is independent alike of our notice or judgment. Few men have written more on Scriptural and religious subjects, none have written in a better spirit and in a more attractive style than Dr. MacDuff. May he long continue to work in those sacred fields, from which he has produced so much that is spiritually beautiful as well as profitable for his age!

GONE BEFORE. BEING A MANUAL OF CONSOLATION FOR THE BEREAVED, AND A WELL OF SYMPATHY FOR THE SORROWING, FILLED FROM MANY SOURCES. By HENRY SOUTHGATE. London: Crosby, Lockwood & Co., Stationers' Hall Court.

Mr. Southgate is doing a good and needful work, in taking extracts from authors on every variety of subject. We think he has been far more happy in the selections in his previous volumes than in the one now before us. He has gone very often to common-place authors, and to mere popular preachers, to do a work which requires thoughts profoundly rational, spiritual, and tender.

HEALING LEAVES. Sermons by JOHN HENRY SMITH, M.A. London: Hatchard & Co., Piccadilly.

Here is a volume containing thirty sermons, the subjects of which are "The Son of Man, Christ Glorifying the Father, The Ascension of Christ, Our Father's House, The Family of Christ, Christian All-sufficiency, Seasonable Strength, Prayer in Trouble, The Rejected Inquirer, The Ambitious Petitioners, The Publican's Prayer, Secret Prayer, Dying in Sin, Sowing and Reaping, The Rich Man and Lazarus, The Box of Spike-nard, The First and Great Commandment, Philippi, The Man Born Blind, The Mission of Moses, Peter, and Cornelius, The Mystery of Christ, Christ our Peace, Church Privileges and Dignities, the Church the Exponent of the Divine Wisdom, Men's Disparagement of Men, Inadequate Apprehensions of the Evil of Sin, the Essential and the Ornamental, St. Paul's Prayer for the Ephesians."

Years ago we noticed and most heartily recommended two volumes of discourses from the pen of this accomplished preacher, who for many years ministered to a most intelligent and influential congregation in Leamington. These Sermons remind us of those of the late Henry Melvill, one of the greatest preachers of this 19th century, and who in our young life used to vibrate on every chord of our nature and transport us into the realities of the spiritual domain. In some respects Mr. Smith is his superior. Whilst equal in argumentative power and affluent language, he seems to excel in originality, insight into the workings of the human soul, catholic spirit, and tender pathos. We greatly regret to learn that this noble preacher, by reason of those infirmities which age brings on all, contemplates retirement from public life. May sacred memories of the past, bright hopes for the future, and the smiles of our common Father elevate his spirit into the serene and sunny regions of heavenly thought and devotion!

There are passages in many of these Sermons which, for elevating sentiment, clearness of conception, and beauty of expression, are seldom to be met with in pulpit discourses. Our eyes have just fallen on one which we feel compelled to quote, limited as is our space. It is on the sermon entitled "*Our Father's House*," founded on the passage, "In my Father's house are many mansions." "He manifestly is the happy man in whom the religious capacity and social capacity are developed together,

each lending its own grace and loveliness to the other, each imparting to the other its own element of happiness. Then the man lives, the whole man lives. His heart is no longer one-half mortified and dead. Not only are both the great principles of his nature exercised upon their appropriate objects, but each takes the character of the other. His domestic feelings become religious, his religious feelings become domestic. His home is a sanctuary, and the sanctuary a home."

DICKENSON'S THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY. No. 6. VOL. II. London: Richard D. Dickenson, Farringdon Street.

This is a very valuable serial, made up of theological articles of foreign authors, chiefly American. These authors no doubt receive a satisfactory financial acknowledgment, although transatlantic publishers do not seem to recognize the obligation of recompensing English authors for the publication of their works. Several volumes of our productions are now being issued from the American press even without our knowledge and consent. We rejoice to know that the immorality of this is beginning to be felt everywhere. Why should publishers in America enrich their exchequer with the productions of our brain, and make us no acknowledgment? It is one of the greatest crimes in the commercial transactions of mankind. Plagiarism and pirating in theological literature have grown to an abomination. It is time for English publishers to set their faces against this moral abomination. The articles in this book cannot be read by any without deriving great profit. The Editor does his work in the ablest way. His selections are admirable, his literary intelligence and reviews of books show him to be a scholar and a thinker of no common order.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MRS. FLETCHER, WITH LETTERS AND OTHER FAMILY MEMORIALS. Edited by THE SURVIVOR OF HER FAMILY. Third Edition. Edinburgh: Edmontou & Douglas.

The third edition of a work requires no patronizing word or commendatory push. Mrs. Fletcher was not only superior in her own natural endowments, moral impulses and aims, and mental accomplishments, but in her social fellowships and friendships—the friend of Dr. Arnold, Keble, Lord Brougham, Mazzini, Chalmers, Jeffrey, Wordsworth, and a host of other social stars. The autobiography of a woman of this type and social surroundings could scarcely fail to interest and instruct. The book contains two portraits of herself; one when young, the other at the age of eighty. In both she appears equally lovely: indeed, age seems to have added to the beauty of her countenance—given it the calm majesty of thoughtfulness. The general impression is, that age destroys the beauty of the countenance: it is not so, we think, where the intellectual faculties have been healthfully employed, and where the streams of social love have continued to flow fresh and pure. Anyhow, we should prefer greeting with "a holy kiss" of love the face before us of eighty, to that of the girl of fifteen.

TRUE TO LIFE. A SIMPLE STORY. By A SKETCHER FROM NATURE.
London: Macmillan & Co.

This is an interesting story, written with a good intent. The characters, which are varied, are often so well drawn that you believe in their historic existence, and feel anxious to know some of them, who seem so amiable, so good, and so true. Most of them move in the ecclesiastical region, and have much to do with parsons, canons, bazaars, sacerdotal dinners, and charitable conventionalities. He who begins to read it will go through it, and whilst feeling pleasure in the novel will be perhaps all the better at the end.

BOOKS TO BE NOTICED.

"THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE OF CHINA." By J. THOMSON, F.R.G.S. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 76, Great Queen Street.

"ARROWS AND ANECDOTES." By DWIGHT MOODY. *Christian Age* Office, 89, Farringdon Street.

"IMPERIAL FEDERATION OF GREAT BRITAIN AND HER COLONIES." By FREDERICK YOUNG. S. W. Silver & Co., Cornhill.

"COMMENTARY ON THE ORIGINAL TEXT OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES." By HORATIO B. HACKETT, D.D. London: Hamilton, Adams & Co.

"A GLOSSARY OF LITURGICAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL TERMS." By Rev. F. LEE, D.C.L., F.S.A. Bernard Quaritch, 15, Piccadilly.

"LIFE'S AFTERMATH." By EMMA MARSHALL. Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday, 54, Fleet Street.

"BIBLICAL OUTLINES." By BURLINGTON B. WALK. Vol. I. "THE PENTATEUCH AND THE GOSPELS;" and "IN QUEST OF A CREED." Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

"THE FAITHFUL LOCAL PREACHER, A MEMORIAL OF WILLIAM GIBSON." By Rev. WILLIAM HUDSON. Wesleyan Conference Office, Castle Street, City Road.

"THE LIFE OF CHRIST." By F. W. FARRAR, D.D., Canon of Westminster. Part I. (Illustrated). Cassell, Petter & Galpin, Ludgate Hill.

"FREEDOM OF THE WILL VINDICATED." By the late Rev. J. G. STEWART. Glasgow: David Bryce & Son.

"LITERARY AND SOCIAL JUDGMENTS." By N. R. GREG. Fourth Edition, considerably enlarged. Vols. I. & II. Trübner & Co., Ludgate Hill.

"THE NEW JERUSALEM AND THE SAVED NATIONS." An Exposition of Rev. xxi., xxii. By an Oxford Graduate. Elliot Stock.

"THE ANGLO-ISRAEL POST-BAG." By Rev. J. H. TITCOMB, M.A. N. G. H. Guest, 29, Paternoster Row.

"SERMONS BY REV. EDMUND MORTLOCK, B.D. Edited by his nephew, W. F. JOHN KAYE, M.A., Archdeacon of Lincoln. Hatchards, Piccadilly.

"THE OXFORD METHODISTS." By Rev. L. TYERMAN. Hodder & Stoughton.

"LIFE AND TIMES OF THE REV. SAMUEL WESLEY, M.A." By L. TYERMAN. Simpkin, Marshall & Co.

"THE BIBLICAL MUSEUM." By JAMES COMPER GRAY. Old Testament, Vol. I. Elliot Stock.

"COMMENTARY ON JOB." By Dr. ROBINSON. R. Dickenson, Farringdon Street.

"THE KORAN NEW TRANSLATION." "THE QUIVER FOR 1876." Cassell & Co.

"THE YOUNG RAJAH." "THE CHATTERBOX FOR 1876." "THE PRIZE FOR 1876." Wells Gardener, Paternoster Row.

"PROPHETS OF CHRISTENDOM." By Rev. BOYD CARPENTER. Hodder & Stoughton.

THE HOMILIST.

EDITORS: DAVID THOMAS, D.D., URIJAH REES THOMAS.

VOL. I. EDITOR'S ENLARGED SERIES. [VOLUME XXXVIII. FROM COMMENCEMENT.]

LONDON: SIMPKIN & MARSHALL. PHILADELPHIA: SMITH & ENGLISH.

Price 7s. 6d.

This Volume contains ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN Sermons, more or less elaborate. Amongst the contributors are Revs. Samuel Davidson, D.D., LL.D. (Translator of Tischendorf's Greek Testament), R. A. Redford, M.A., LL.B. (Professor at New College, London), J. G. Greenhough, M.A. (Professor at Baptist College, Bristol), G. Dean, D.Sc. (Professor at Spring Hill, College) Septimus March, B.A., W. Forsyth, M.A., etc., etc.

The subjects of the sermons are—

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 Life Measured by Days. | 38 Intemperance. | 78 Christ. |
| 2 Jesus and the Resurrection. | 39 Mary Magdalene. | 79 The Great Shepherd. |
| 3 The Word "Saved." | 40 Playing the Man. | 80 An Invasion. |
| 4 Pastoral Retrospection. | 41 Tired of Life. | 81 God's People. |
| 5 A Social Betrayer. | 42 The Soul's Refuge. | 82 God's Depriving Dispensation towards Men. |
| 6 Phases of Piety. | 43 Heaven-gate. | 83 The Testament and Testator. |
| 7 The Compassionable in Life. | 44 Mysteries. | 84 The Kindness of God. |
| 8 The Deprecable and the Desirable. | 45 The Depression of Good Men. | 85 The Christian Ministry. |
| 9 Spiritual Experimentalism. | 46 Opposite Views of a Good Man's Life. | 86 A Two-fold Scene. |
| 10 Man in Many Aspects. | 47 Moral Nabalism. | 87 Gospel Ministers. |
| 11 God's Treatment of Wicked Men. | 48 Devils and Men. | 88 The Mutual Ministry of the Good. |
| 12 Sad Memories. | 49 God and the Earth. | 89 A Man Dying. |
| 13 Social Insolence. | 50 Too Much Mere Sentiment in Religion. | 90 The Spirit World. |
| 14 Physical Pain. | 51 Pleasing God. | 91 The Mode of Dying. |
| 15 Mental Distress. | 52 God Working on the Earth. | 92 Divine Ownership. |
| 16 Job's Self-Vindication. | 53 Man in Trouble Crying to God. | 93 God and Good Men. |
| 17 Aspects of Unbelief. | 54 The Pharisee and the Publican. | 94 Man Disregarding Man. |
| 18 Christ's Teaching. | 55 Life a Stewardship. | 95 The Wealth of the Good. |
| 19 Christ Forecasting His Death. | 56 A Rousing Voice to Moral Sleepers. | 96 Soul Illumination. |
| 20 Christian Discipleship. | 57 The Sentimental in Religion. | 97 The Highest Literature. |
| 21 Moral Bondage. | 58 The Need of a Guide. | 98 Christianity and Philosophy. |
| 22 The Primal Parents of Moral Character. | 59 Sketches from Genesis xxxiii. Joseph in Egypt. | 99 A Noble Ancestry. |
| 23 Words of Angels to Men on Earth: Words to Lot. | 60 Humanity. | 100 Doing Good. |
| 24 Ibid., to Daniel. | 61 The Soul's Error. | 101 Blessed Ignorance. |
| 25 Ibid., to Zacharias. | 62 Pleasure. | 102 A Great Evil. |
| 26 Ibid., to Spectators of Ascension. | 63 The Work of Works. | 103 The Last Day. |
| 27 Ibid., to Mary. | 64 Soul Salvation. | 104 Christ as a Plant of Renown. |
| 28 God's Relation to Humanity. | 65 Apostasy. | 105 Man's Ruin. |
| 29 God's Relation to the Good. | 66 Sin an Antagonist. | 106 A Child in the Midst. |
| 30 The Reckoner Reckoned. | 67 The Soul's Exodus. | 107 Persecuted for Righteousness. |
| 31 Retrospection. | 68 Israel's Preacher. | 108 An Awfully Significant Scene. |
| 32 Hope. | 69 Gospel Work. | 109 Pulpit Essentials. |
| 33 Scientific Objections to Prayer. | 70 Civic Rulers. | 110 The Small Subservient to the Great. |
| 34 Biblical Doctrine of Prayer. | 71 False Prophets. | 111 A Double Picture. |
| 35 "The Iron Gate." | 72 True Prophets. | 112 The Number of the Good on Earth. |
| 36 The Bow in the Cloud. | 73 The Gospel Age. | 113 The Sublimest Science. |
| 37 Earnest Christianity. | 74 The Moral Regeneration of the World. | 114 God's Promises. |
| | 75 The Church of God. | 115 The Suggestiveness of Christianity. |
| | 76 Man's Religious Nature. | 116 The Sorrows Easter Consoles. |
| | 77 The Moral Monarchy of the World. | 117 The Sins Easter Condemns. |

Besides all these sermons there are various articles on other general subjects:—

First: **THE PARACHUTE'S EMBLEMATORY HELPS.** Under this head are five sections,—
 1. *Scientific Facts used as Symbols of Eternal Truths.* The facts in this volume are—(1) The Esquimaux Dog: Man's Incapability of adapting Himself. (2) The Grave of Animals: Posthumous Space. (3) The Larvæ: the Despicable and the Destructive. (4) The Foraminifera: The Might of the Feeble. (5) The Chimachima: Attacking the Wounded. (6) Fungi: Besetting Sins. (7) The Cydippe Pileus: Subtleness of Beauty. (8) The Sloth: Climbing Man. (9) Catching Turtles: Using One to Catch Another. (10) The Cyanæa Capillata: Sin's Insidious Attacks. (11) Seals: Dissimilar Effects of the Same Cause. (12) The Eagle and the Peregrine: an Undeserved Reputation. (13) Plants: The Equable Temperament. (14) The Byrrhus: The Tactics of Cowards. (15) The Seal: an Example for Landowners. (16) The Fauna: The Wilderness a Fruitful Field. (17) The Gymnotes: Batteries of Passion. (18) The Phosphorescent Sea: Aspects of Love. (19) The Seal: a Caution to Meddlers. (20) The Oxybellus: Success Won by Stratagem. (21) The Phasmina: Things are not what they seem.

2. *Ancient Myths their Moral Meanings.* The myths treated in this volume are—(1) The Incarnations of Vishnu. (2) Osiris. (3) Isis. (4) Herakles. (5) Pallas Athene. (6) Zeus, or Jupiter.

3. *Biblical Anecdotes as Illustrations of Eternal Truths.* The anecdotes given here, and their lessons are—(1) The Rock in Horeb. (2) Moses and the Children of Israel. (3) The Death of the Firstborn. (4) Samson.

4. *Hebrew Ceremonies as Illustrations of Eternal Truths.* The ceremonies considered in this volume are—(1) The Holocaust. (2) The Meat Offering. (3) The Shleamin. (4) The Sin Offering. (5) The Passover. (6) The Pentecost.

5. *Original Similitudes;* where we find such subjects as—Scientists and Saints; The Cardinals of True Theology; Equality; Work; The Beauty of the World; Man's Treatment of Woman; The Unpardonable State; Principle and Prosperity; The Humanity of the Bible; Ambition, etc., etc., etc.

Secondly: **BIBLICAL CRITICISM:** containing articles from the pen of Dr. Stanley, Dr. Lindsay, etc., etc.

Thirdly: **THE PULPIT AND ITS HANDMAIDS:** containing extracts from the works of Thackeray, Southey, Scott, Pope, Dr. Carpenter, Stuart Mill, Dr. Hopkins, E. Brontë, Mrs. Browning, Buchanan, etc., etc.

Fourthly: **MY MINISTRY AT STOCKWELL:** containing six sketches of an autobiographic character by the Editor.

Fifthly: **LITERARY NOTICES:** which contain Reviews of a large number of important theological, homiletical, and other works.

NOTICES OF THE PRESS CONCERNING THIS ENLARGED SERIES.

"Great has been the vitality of this periodical. . . . That it should have continued for so many years and filled its sphere with steady brilliance is more remarkable because of the increase in our periodic literature. Had it not been conducted with singular ability and skill it would long ere this have become extinct. . . . It is a strong and beautiful growth. . . . *The Homilist* is essentially expository. It does not bring ideas to passages of Scripture, but evolves the great truths they contain. . . . An expositor, the Editor does not lose himself in details. His thoughts are never commonplace, and his diction is ever chaste, eloquent, and dignified. . . . The articles from his prolific pen are often enriched by prose quotations which are never prosaic and poetical quotations which display an extensive acquaintance with and appreciation of the poets. . . . This series promises, under the joint editorship of Rev. U. R. Thomas, whose numerous productions show he is the possessor of an active, bright, and well-cultivated mind, promises to eclipse all preceding series."—*The Christian News*.

"*The Homilist* enters upon a new era in its honoured career. The Rev. U. R. Thomas has been appointed co-Editor with his father, and will doubtless infuse new life into this well-known pulpit serial. The new Editor's Sermons warrant us in believing that he can appreciate originality, and will not patronize dulness in his contributors."—*The English Independent*.

"There really is no work for ministers equal to it: and we might say, none to be compared to it. . . . It has discourses that might be matched against the most splendid pulpit productions of ancient or modern times. . . . There is hardly a page that is not suggestive or fruitful of precious thought."—*Theological Quarterly*.

"Full of vigour and usefulness. We must not omit to mention the papers from Dr. Thomas's pen on his 'Ministry at Stockwell,' which are full of humour and anecdote, and replete with his independent manliness of spirit and style."—*Literary World*.

"Having outlived many competitors, the work appears in its 38th volume with unabated vigour and youthful freshness. . . . It is crowded with homiletic matter marked by ability and suggestiveness."—*The Christian World*.

"This is the 38th volume of the famous *Homilist*. It commences a new series . . . an incomparable help of the ministry."—*The Christian Age*.

